

NATIONAL CENTRE
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

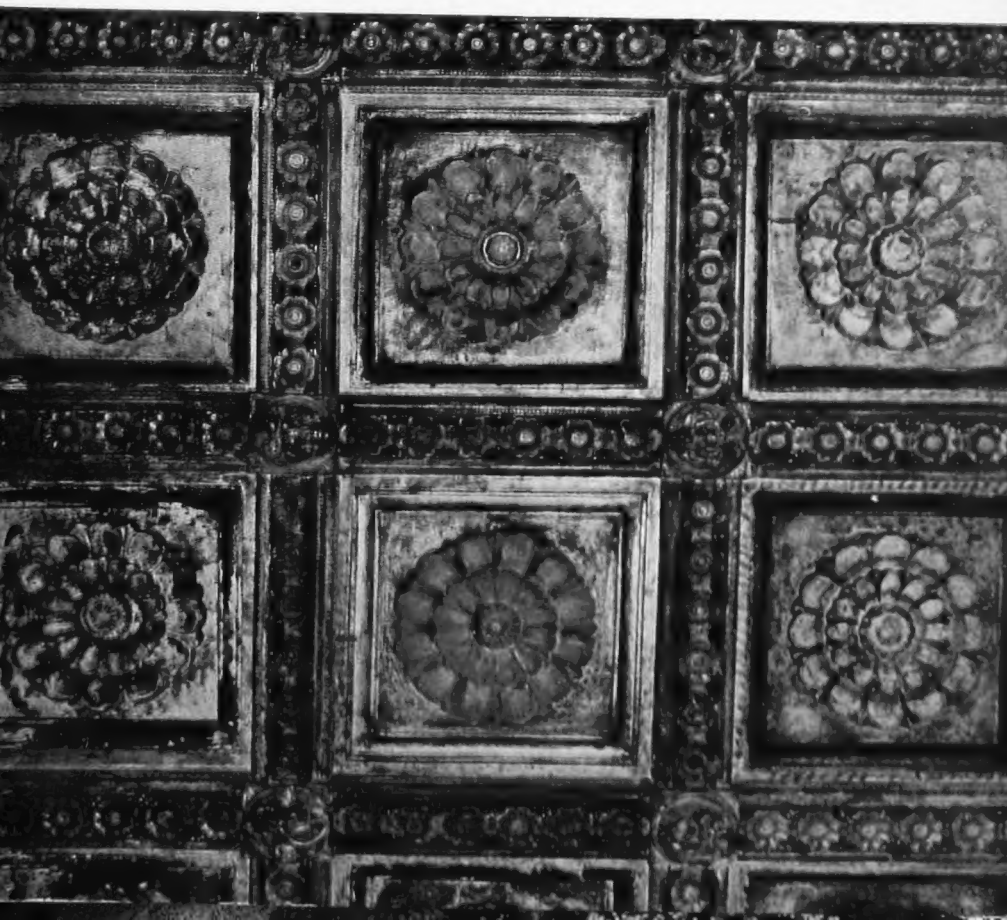
राष्ट्रीय संगीत नाट्य केन्द्र

Quarterly Journal

Volume IV

Number 1

March 1975



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Price: Rs. 7.50 India: £1 United Kingdom: \$3 U.S.A.

The Arts and Education in the Late Twentieth Century: Challenge and Response

Richard Hoggart

[This is the text of the address delivered at the Eleventh Conference of the International Society for Music Education held in Perth, Western Australia in August, 1974.]

From one angle, the biggest challenge before the arts and artists today is a fortunate one: what to do in the face of greatly increased attention and greatly increased funds? Admittedly there are, as always, blank spots. But overall an outstanding feature of the last two decades has been the increased importance given to the arts—to "culture" in that rather narrow sense—by the governments of most countries. Think of the enormous amounts spent on the arts today, whether in Communist countries or in the wealthier capitalist countries. The USA and the Soviet Union raise and allocate the money in very different ways; but they both provide massively. Or recall the particular importance given, in most developing or new States, to the national culture. "Culture" there means more than the arts, but the arts have a central place in it.

But all that doesn't take us far. *Why* is there this increased interest in the Arts? What does it mean? In the industrialised countries, the most common way of justifying this large allocation of funds is still to see it as a matter of giving something known, agreed (the accepted and traditional arts), to a much larger body of people than heretofore, to a great body of people "out there", who are conceived as not having had access to that heritage hitherto and as now being due to have it. At the best this is a well-intentioned, if simple, inspiration. Rather less attractively, the wish to introduce people to the Arts is sometimes regarded, half-consciously, as a way of keeping them quiet, of "civilising" the "masses" who are now so evidently within the full stream of society.

In the developing or new countries, the appreciation of the national culture is promoted as a way of retaining touch with, or getting in touch again with, part of the nation's lost or hidden history, of that past from which the experience of colonisation severed the body of people and their Westernised leaders. Given both the inadequacy of agreed historical records and the unresolved major political tensions in many of these countries, that "national heritage" is sometimes the past as it is selected and interpreted by whichever party or ethnic group happens at the particular moment to be in power.

Naturally, there is much debate today about how these increased funds for culture are to be most effectively used. Two poles of the debate—

two of the terms of art among the new professions which group the cultural middlemen—are "access" and "participation", access for the great body of people to the world of the arts, and a readier taking part by them. As to "access" there is still much to be done, even in the industrialised countries (the question takes another form in those developing countries where oral traditions survive; but there is no space to go into that aspect here). The biggest single problem, as to "access" in the developed world, arises from over-centralisation within the capital cities. In most such countries there are simply not enough libraries or theatres or galleries or general purpose arts centres outside the metropolis. Within the capital cities themselves in particular, but also to some extent elsewhere, one of the major issues concerns the best disposition of subsidies which will allow all those who cannot afford to but wish to patronise the more expensive performances (ballet, opera, major classical theatre) to do so. I am thinking in particular of young people, and of young people as *individuals* urged on by their growing personal interests, not simply of them as members of various subsidised and officially recognised groups.

Yet overall the matter of "access" is less difficult than—or, rather, is best subsumed within—that of "participation". For in most industrialised countries some of the arts are available to almost everybody today whether through cheap good books or through gramophone records or through radio and television. And some encouraging figures of growth can be cited. But in general the volume and level and range of attention to the arts do not increase to the extent that their enthusiastic promoters must have hoped.

This is the point at which the whole matter begins to engage more directly with some social and cultural realities which are not always sufficiently considered by those who are helping to make so much more money available for promoting the arts. This is where we have all to look more closely at our own assumptions. Let me mention four typical issues:

(a) In one sense, "participation" is already enormous in some countries. Thus, the practice of amateur dramatics in the United Kingdom occupies the spare time of literally thousands and thousands every week. Are we not satisfied with that, as an instance of participation? Or do we intend something else by the word? I hope the latter. Amateur participation of this kind can be very agreeable and in some ways fulfilling; it can also be chiefly a form of self-gratification which does not lead on to a real engagement with the art.

(b) The advocates of participation who include in the word's meaning a participation in decision-making must not be satisfied with being offered powers at local levels only. Even if regionalisation becomes much more effective than it is now, there will still be the need for national decisions—about support for those complex arts which are bound to be very expensive and in which, in any generation, few countries will be able to mount more than one or two instances at the right professional level; or about what should be the level of subsidy from the national purse which is available to

be shared out; or about many other even harder general questions, especially those which concern freedom and surveillance, whether in the arts or in the use of the mass media. Greater regional autonomy should not be accepted as a substitute for involvement in those national decisions. Yet *effective* participation of this wider kind is not at all easy to arrange. It is easier to choose—for a few of the inevitable but not always decisive committees—from the stage army of provincial good big names, or to select a few presumed harmless "representative ordinary men and women".

(c) What is the relationship between striving for greater participation in the accepted arts and the fact that in many cases the whole thrust of a society—in particular, its commercial thrust, and the effects of this on the uses to which the mass media are put—undercuts consistently the importance of those activities which require sustained and disinterested attention? It is not difficult to argue that the increased support for spreading the established arts is acting as a form of easy and relatively ineffective conscience-money.

(d) Sometimes people, even though "access" is easy, do not seem to want it; and refuse "participation". Are they then being ungrateful; or stupid? Or are they making an implicitly critical comment on just *what* is being offered, and on the way it is being offered, on the range of socio-cultural values and assumptions behind the offers?

Still, and though such problems do arise from the increasing official interest in the arts, isn't that interest on balance something to be very glad about? To some extent, yes. But at this point I remember two often-quoted remarks. First: "When I hear the word culture, I reach for my gun". Which is usually regarded as simply barbaric; not at all like the attitude of most governments today. Yes; but in another respect the remark pays more respect to culture than many of its present supporters. It recognises culture's explosive potentiality, its capacity to challenge and possibly upset a regime. Most societies, most governments, do not habitually link, and do not wish to link, the arts with freedom of criticism, with unusual experiment and exploration, with the searching, unexpected and surprising.

The other phrase is the title of a pamphlet by Herbert Read: "To hell with culture". Yes, to hell with culture if it is assumed to be some sort of varnish, frill, front or soporific; something which will be permitted so long as it doesn't disturb. To hell with all the extra funds for culture if the coddling smoothes the coddled, if artists of all kinds, whilst being very well cared for, are expected to be two-dimensional men, firmly held within the unquestioned, and not-to-be questioned, criteria of particular regimes.

The foregoing seems the minimum necessary background to any thinking about the place given to the arts today. But it should be supplemented by some comments more directly about the nature of the arts themselves.

First, the arts are about the fundamental nature of our lives and about the exploration and discussion of that nature in freedom and truth. The arts are nothing if they are not umbilically linked to the quality of our daily lives. It does not matter how much money is put into the performance of the arts in no matter how many countries if some of the most important problems before those countries are not seriously broached, if urban squalor or rural squalor, or if a feeling of individual worthlessness or degradation, increase all the time; or if freedom of comment does not increase, or is even reduced, at the very moment when governments are exhibiting a new-found interest in the arts and the quality of life.

Still, you might object, aren't I basing my remarks mainly on literature, on that art which uses words and trades directly with ideas and so is bound sooner or later either to settle for reinforcing the local, current conventional wisdom or to face a confrontation with the authorities. Isn't music a relatively "safe" art, since it is not so easily translatable into unpopular "views"? So can't some arts survive, and survive without meretriciousness, even under various forms of tyranny?

Certainly some arts—music, yes, and some ballet—can have an easier time, and do not so evidently disturb the powers that be. But one can make two comments on this rather simplistic position. First, some governments have recognised—though perhaps unconsciously—the social power of at least one kind of music. They banned pop music and the kind of dancing which accompanies it. No doubt they called this a justified response to decadence. In another sense they might reasonably have suspected that the fluid, relaxed, small-group inventiveness of that sort of music and dance would implicitly undermine the stiffer stances required by their way of running things.

The second comment is this: that even those arts which think they can operate without harm within a dictatorial regime will find that in the long run they are wrong, that the climate does not encourage the kind of experimentation—often unintelligible to officials or to "the ordinary man" such officials always claim to speak for—without which their art will sooner or later merely repeat itself. Therefore, any system which, whilst claiming to favour the arts, does so only on condition that they are cut off from intellectual or imaginative freedom and hence inventiveness is best resisted by all the arts; they would do better to go underground.

Of course, in all this talk about art as analysis and criticism, I speak from the point of view of the industrialised Western world whose arts are so often self-aware, individualistic, not so much communal or of "the people". What about those countries where art, and especially music and dance, are still part of a shared folk-experience?

I have seen that kind of art in performance, and it is beautiful. One cannot describe it as dead. But it is now sometimes set in amber; and it cannot survive in that form. Indeed, it is changing all the time and very quickly. The dance is becoming a tourist spectacle, a spectacle often

technically more perfect and finished, more "professional", than it used to be but one increasingly out of touch with its own roots. It is wrong to encourage such countries thus to preserve their traditions behind glass.

In any event these artistic experiences, even where they are still untouched by tourism, will increasingly affect fewer and fewer people, even in their own countries. What of all the millions now huddled—every day in increasing numbers—in the vast new cities of the developing world? In short, the developing world is losing, cannot but lose eventually, its privileged relations in the matter of the availability of the arts for the great body of people. The new balance between rural and urban settlement in these countries, the pressures of industrialisation and of the power-structures that accompany it, all reduce the existence and the relevance of oral, face-to-face, artistic and cultural experiences and increase the need for a fifth estate of critical, self-aware, intellectual and artistic activity.

It could further be objected, though, that throughout this paper I am arguing too much about the arts in their social relationships rather than in and for "themselves". Aren't the arts so much a good in themselves that we should, we must, leave them to work in their own hidden ways? Don't they, if they are thus left, work at longer range and so (say) make us sensitive to the possibilities of a better future even under tyranny, more prone—eventually—to working for such a future? Will we appreciate these ways if we are all the time earnestly seeking explicit certificates of good conduct for and from the arts?

There is a passage in W. H. Auden which goes even further. It argues for the *virtue* of fiddling while Rome burns, for the need to resist the cry to drop the fiddles and man the pumps; it adds that this cry goes up in every generation and that if we all listened to it each time we would none of us ever get any music written, played or listened to; it claims that art is not in any definable sense persuasive, that it exists rather than asserts, that its relationships to the human spirit are oblique, that it mirrors an order and beauty beyond the ruck of daily life, that it makes patterns beautiful in and for themselves, but which—if one wants to see some kind of meaning beyond them—mirror the perfect harmony of the life in God. One can see why Auden was so moved by St. Cecilia.

With one side of me, I agree with that position. Or rather, I want to agree. One can see what is lost if the insistence on the social relations of art deafens you from responding to the art in itself: one has first and above all to absorb and be absorbed by the music. Still, I cannot make the distinction in the purity and absoluteness with which it was made by Auden in that particular passage. I would prefer not to have any music if liberty, the freedom to speak and to say honestly what you believe to be the truth, did not exist.

It follows from all the foregoing that teachers of the arts have two main tasks. First, to help those they teach to appreciate and learn to meet better the demands of the arts in themselves, in their own natures. And

this catalytic work is always difficult. We are not chiefly concerned with "passing on" certain recognised fine goods; we are required to help make some things happen. What was wrong with, for example, much literature teaching at British schools in my day was not that it set out to "teach poetry"; but that it often chose poor—sentimental and crude—poetry; or that it discussed even good poetry badly; by invoking irrelevant emotional justifications.

It is here that we come to one of the hardest of all the issues and the one which is almost always avoided at this very time, when there is so much talk about (and this is yet another of the current catch phrases) the "democratisation of art". This is linked with the assertion that we have now happily so widened the definition of art and culture as to be able to recognise that all the arts are equally valuable; that since all art forms, to an extent not sufficiently recognised before, are historically and socially determined, any talk about different *levels* of artistic achievement only indicates the out-of-date thinking of the person who utters it.

Good, up to a certain point. Many things are good in their own ways; one should recognise authenticity and distinctiveness in many of their forms and not set up false hierarchies. But in this process the baby is now going out with the bathwater. For in spite of historic and social conditioning (not determining) and of historic and social rooting (a quite different quality), some instances of each of the different arts are *better* than others. They widen and deepen the potentialities of their particular art in itself; they draw upon, order and interpret, more complex and mature responses to experience. Push-pin is *not* as important as poetry; nor is football, no matter how beautiful a particular game may be, as important an expression of the human spirit as a good symphony—any more than, for that matter, is pop music.

On the other hand, we must not judge people simply by their willingness or apparent capacity to respond to the best in the arts. We have to recognise, first, that some of what is called "high art" is sometimes the merely fashionable—really is a class and brow matter, and dead; that there is in some of the "low" arts more life than in some of the accepted examples of high art; and that therefore some rejections of "high art" may be healthy; and, more important, we should recognise better that the capacity of most people initially to appreciate great art is at least partly decided by their education and other opportunities. In all these matters, what should be kept above all in mind are the potentialities of most people; and as to those there is a great deal of evidence in unexpected places, if only it were attended to.

So at this point we are moving fully into the second task of teachers of the arts. This is that they must become much more aware of the social and cultural influences on their own thinking. Let us take one instance from the United Kingdom. It has become a piece of accepted cultural wisdom there that one of the great achievements of the BBC has been, by carefully calculated activity over years, to encourage and extend the taste for good music. That may be so, though so far as I know no one has ever proved it or set it alongside the concurrent influence of cheap long-playing records. Still, my point here is that the above claim is reiterated by many people as

though it were the main instance of a creative engagement by British broadcasting with contemporary cultural life. It is, notice, a perfect example of an old-fashioned and conventional way of approaching a new medium: one is seeing it as a neutral channel down which one transmits known good goods. A better sign of understanding the cultural relationships and possibilities of the new media would be to recognise British television's role, in the early sixties in particular, in creating new forms of artistic expression for new types of audiences not predetermined by social class or shared educational background. But the people who praise the BBC for encouraging good music rarely recognise television's own kinds of creativeness.

From all I have said, it follows that education in and through the arts matters enormously. It matters, primarily, because it aims to help people respond in the fullest possible sense to what the arts *are*, in and for themselves. It matters also because it requires us to be *engaged*, and to help our students to engage, with the values of men living in their societies.

Musical Iconography in *Shri Tatva Nidhi*

B. V. K. Sastry

Translation of its abstract aural concepts into a visual idiom has been a unique feature of Indian music. The idea is indeed very old. Possibly it is a consequence of the Indian mind's ready recognition of a divine element in all matter and also the urge for its deification. The belief that *Nada* or sound is of divine origin is very old and its different forms may have been viewed as different manifestations of the Supreme God.

This visual concept, at least in its embryonic form, occurs in ancient works on music like the *Brihaddesi* of Matanga (sixth to eighth century A.D.). In this work the seven *svara*-s (notes) have been treated as different entities. Attributes like dynasty, colour, guardian deity, and sentiment have been mentioned in respect of each note. This has been enlarged in later works like the *Bharata Bhashya* of Nanyadeva (1197-1233 A.D.) and the *Sangita Ratnakara* of Sarngadeva (1150 A.D.). Meanwhile another work—*Sangita Makaranda* of Narada (eleventh century)—classifies the *raga*-s, on the basis of sex, into *Purusha* (male) and *Strī* (female). There is also a family-wise classification with eight male *raga*-s having three consorts each.

In the next stage, the *svara*-s and the *raga*-s seem to have acquired anthropomorphic forms, with stylised anatomical features and other paraphernalia symbolical of their various attributes. It is apparent that these pictorial forms have an Agamic and Tantric background. But the basis on which they were evolved is not clear. The earliest description of such visual forms are found in Jain texts. In the illustrations of the *Kalpasutra*, for instance, *sruti*, *svara*, *grama*, *moorccana* and *tana* have been portrayed as deities. This iconical portrayal was possibly meant to help contemplation and worship. They are viewed as entities with a dual aspect: *Nadamaya* (of sound) and *Devatamaya* (of divinity). *Sangita Upanishad Sarodhara* (1340 A.D.), a music treatise by the Jain scholar Vachanacharya Sudhakalasa, contains the earliest iconic descriptions of *svara* and *raga*.

Sangita Upanishad Sarodhara, for instance, describes the *svara*, Shadjā thus:

He is endowed with six faces and has four arms;
While two of them play the veena, the others hold lotus flowers
He is as lustrous as a lotus flower and belongs to the *Devakula*
(the dynasty of gods).
He was born in *Jambudvīpa* and his guardian
deity is Brahma; he rides a peacock
Whose sound he imitates; that is the *svara* Shadjā.

(SUS, Ch. III, *Shloka* 42-43)

Similarly the description of the well-known *raga* *Vasanta* reads thus:

He is endowed with six faces and ten arms,
The *raga* *Vasanta* who shines like gold.
He holds the *Tala*, *Shankha* (conch), *Khatvanga* (dagger),
Phala (fruit), *Chakra* and Lotus; while his two hands
play the veena, the other two are held in the
gestures of *Varada* and *Abhaya*. He rides on the
Kokila (cuckoo) and he is sung in the months of
Chaitra and *Vaishakha*.

(SUS, Ch. III, *Shloka* 84-85)

Starting as the *dhyaana* or contemplative form of the *raga*, this pictorial concept was gradually altered to represent its underlying *bhava* or sentiment, and extended to the area of *Kavya* or poetry. The advent of the *Nayaka-Nayika* (hero-heroine) aspect was inevitable. The pictures became lyrical and highly romantic in tone and the environment, too, changed from the celestial to the terrestrial. In brief, the pictures acquired a human touch, which is clear to anyone who has studied the stages in the development of the *Ragamala* pictures of the Rajastani and other schools.

The *Ragamala* pictures are believed to be confined to northern India and regarded as a unique feature of Hindustani music which follows the family-wise classification of the *raga*-s. This, no doubt, provided the stimulus for a lyrical pictorial interpretation. This visualisation of the *raga*-s which started in the medieval period gradually changed in form. Their interpretation, too, seems to have changed from time to time and from text to text. Nevertheless, by and large, all these pictures follow the classification and characterisation of the *Hanumanmata* (school of Hanuman). This is dealt with in the *Sangita Darpana* of Damodara who lived in the sixteenth century.

Karnatic music follows the classification of *raga*-s under the *Mela* scheme, which is built upon a methodical permutation of the *svara*-s and their variants. Possibly this could not provide sufficient stimulus for the visual interpretation of the *raga*, an element absent in almost all the texts on music following the *Mela* scheme. But there are some exceptions like the *Ragavibodha* of Somanatha. Perhaps he could not ignore certain ancient concepts even though they could not fit into his system of classification under *Mela*-s. Fifty-one *raga*-s have been described along with their visual forms in the *Ragavibodha*. They have been generally portrayed in their *devatamaya* (divine) forms, with their *rasabhava* (sentiments) the *nayakibhava* has also been added in some of the *raga*-s. In addition, some of the later works in the south on *Bharata Shashtra* contain references to the visual forms of the *raga*-s. But no serious effort seems to have been made to translate these into colourful pictures corresponding to the *Ragamala* paintings of north India. It is against this background that we have to appreciate the Musical Iconography in the *Shri Tatva Nidhi*.

Shri Tatva Nidhi presents the old visual concepts in colourful, pictorial forms which are closer in spirit to the Agama-based sculpture of south India. *Shri Tatva Nidhi* is an encyclopedia of *Purana*, *Itihasa*, *Tantra*, *Agama*,

Shilpa and Jyotishya. The material has been condensed from ancient works. The text is in Sanskrit, but written in the Kannada script. It is noteworthy that in Karnataka two such works had been produced before it. The first was the *Manasollasa* or the *Abhilashitarthe Chintamani* of Chalukya Someshwara in the twelfth century and the *Shiva Tatva Ratnakara* of Basappa Nayaka of Keladi (seventeenth century). They also contain chapters on music and the later work also mentions the visual characterisation of the *raga-s*. But *Shri Tatva Nidhi* is unique in that all this material is illustrated with beautiful pictures.

Shri Tatva Nidhi contains nine sections, each entitled a *Nidhi* or treasure. The *Nava Nidhi* idea was possibly inspired by Kubera, the Lord of the Nine Treasures. The nine sections of the work are as follows: *Shakti Nidhi*, *Vishnu Nidhi*, *Shiva Tatva Nidhi*, *Brahma Tatva Nidhi*, *Graha Tatva Nidhi*, *Vaishnava Nidhi*, *Shaiva Nidhi*, *Agama Nidhi* and *Koutuka Nidhi*.

The author of this great work is Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar who ruled Mysore between 1799-1868 A.D. His rule was indeed a golden age in respect of the patronage to and development of arts and letters. Himself a prolific writer and composer and well-versed in many of the subjects dealt with in this work, Krishnaraja Wodeyar encouraged literature, music and painting. *Shri Tatva Nidhi* is a beautiful combination of all the three. It contains nearly one thousand two hundred pages (of half-imperial size) and is fully illustrated with paintings and drawings. Considering the variety and range of material incorporated in it, and also the quality of the paintings, more than a decade or two must have been spent in its preparation. The work must have been produced between 1810 and 1830 because the East India Company resumed the administration of the state in 1831, resulting in a drastic cut in the finances of the ruler.

This work may be deemed as a pictorial digest of all our ancient knowledge. The beautiful pictures certainly give a graphic idea of ancient concepts; these are described in the verses preceding each painting. There are only two copies of this work, one which is in the Oriental Research Institute at Mysore and the other in the palace. The text of this work has been published by the Tanjore Saraswati Mahal Library. The images of the Gods and Goddesses in the recently opened temple of Kamakotishvara at the Hanuman Ghat in Ghat have been fashioned after their descriptions in the *Shri Tatva Nidhi*.

The paintings in the *Shri Tatva Nidhi* are drawn in clear but delicate lines; the figures are well-proportioned and painted in bright colours. The influence of the *Agama-s* on these paintings is obvious. The style is post-Vijayanagar, and belongs to the Mysore school which is similar in many respects to the Tanjore school of painting. A study of this work is an enlightening and edifying experience, and one article cannot do full justice to the material contained in it.

Since the Gandharvas are the repositories of the divine arts of music and dance; the music section opens with a description of their world. This



Raga-s Shri and Vasanta

is followed by descriptions and pictures of *svara-s*, *raga-s* and their consorts and *tala-s*. Each painting is preceded by a descriptive verse in Sanskrit and also the *moorchhana* or the scalic movement in the case of *raga-s*. The opening *alankara* phrase is also added in respect of the *tala-s*. There are thirty-five pictures of *raga-s* and their consorts and their classification mostly follows the *Hanumanmata*, as detailed in the *Sangita Darpana*.

Unless a romantic or other situation has been suggested, the *raga-s* and their *varangana* or consorts have been portrayed as *devatamurthi* or deities, with appropriate stylised postures and other attributes. A few of them will be examined now in some cases against the background of references in the *Sangita Darpana* and also their forms in the *Ragamala* paintings. We may start with the *raga* Vasanta itself. Its earliest iconical characterisation in the *Sangita Upanishad Sarodhara* has already been mentioned. The portrayal of this *raga* in the *Ragamala* series is quite different from the six-headed and ten-armed deity described in the above work. According to the *Hanumanmata*, Vasanta is a *ragini* and a consort of the *raga*

Shri. But at some later period the *raga* also came to be associated with the Spring. And the *Ragamala* series portrays the splendour and the spirit of that season. For this who could be more ideal than Krishna? The *Ragamala* pictures feature Vāsanta *ragini* disguised as Krishna, singing and dancing to a chorus of drum and cymbals, in a setting of flowering bushes, water-ponds with lilies, an atmosphere indicative of the spring. The picture in *Shri Tatva Nidhi* features straightaway Shri Krishna dressed in his *pitambarā*, playing on the flute and attracting all the animals; maidens around him are seen playing on instruments. The dress of these maidens is purely South Indian and the painting is arresting because of the rich hues of the apparel and ornaments.

Now let us consider another *raga* which is deemed as the *adi* or first *raga*, namely Bhairava. The very name indicates Shiva with all his terrifying attributes. But there are two variations of the Shiva theme in the *Ragamala-s* which presented milder features. In the first, he is portrayed as riding on the bull with his usual attributes like the Ganga, the crescent moon, and the *trishula*. In the other version, Shiva is characterised as the lord of love (Rati). He is portrayed as dallying with ladies. But the picture in the *Shri Tatva Nidhi* is like an icon and painted in accordance with the verse in *Sangita Darpana*.

Carrying Ganga, adorned by the crescent moon, and having three eyes, ornamented with serpents and covered with the skin of the Elephant, his hands holding the *Trishula* and the head (*Munda*) and the body besmeared with ashes, that is Bhairava, the *adi* or the first *raga*.

(*Shloka 198*)

In the picture Shiva is seated on a *bhadrāsana* in the usual *mandalāsā* posture letting down the right foot and folding the left leg, with one hand holding the *trishula*, the other *munda* or the head and the other two in *Varada* and *Abhaya* gestures. A stately picture, austere in tone, more suitable for contemplation and worship.

Shiva also figures in the picture of the *ragini* Bhairavi. Here instead of the *Shivalinga*, housing in a marble sanctum and worshipped by the young love-lorn damsel Bhairavi, (so characteristic of *Ragamala* pictures), Shiva himself is seated on a throne. Bhairavi is seated at the feet of the lord and is worshipping him with lotus flowers, while the attendants are providing the music.

Megha is another *raga* which provides an interesting contrast with its counterpart in the Rajastani *Ragamala* pictures. Also called Meghamalhara in some cases, almost all the *Ragamala* pictures have Krishna as the central character, in a setting with heavily overcast skies, the dark clouds streaked by lightning and Krishna himself in the form of the *raga* Megha-dancing or disporting himself with the Gopis.

In the *Shri Tatva Nidhi*, this rain god has been portrayed as seated on a mountain. A huge rainbow covering almost the width of the horizon

serves as his halo, while peacocks are disporting at his feet. On one side are the *Chataka* birds eagerly awaiting the rain drops. And the peasants, standing on another side awaiting the good graces of this rain god, are noteworthy. Megha himself is seated in the classic *Padmasana* posture, ornamented with a crown, necklace and holding a long sword, possibly suggestive of the lightning, in his right hand.

The picture of Shri *raga* is of special importance in that it is rare even in the *Ragamala* paintings. Its portrait in *Shri Tatva Nidhi* features a handsome youth, lordling over the music world, and served by the seven *svara-s* grouped on either side. He is wearing a scarlet upper cloth (*uttariya*) seated on a *Bhadrāsana*, in the *Mandalāsā* posture, his right hand holding a lotus while the left is relaxed and stretched on the folded left leg. His right foot is being pressed by a maiden while three others are awaiting on the sides. All the figures are well proportioned and glowing with rich colours. This is one of the most beautiful *raga* pictures in the *Shri Tatva Nidhi*.

While some of the *raga* pictures in this work are portrayed as icons, there are also others which illustrate and evoke the underlying *bhava* or sentiment. Most of these paintings are identical in mood with their *Ragamala* counterparts though the mode of the portrayal is different. A *raga* like Bhoopali for instance. She is described in the old texts as a *Virahotkanthita nayika*, a heroine suffering from the extremes pangs of separation.

"She is white and her body is anointed with saffron, the charming maiden is endowed with high elevated breasts and a radiant face like the moon. She is pained by the memories and pangs of separation of her lord; that is the *raga* Bhoopali who fully exudes the *Shanta rasa*"

This is the description in the *Sangita Darpana*.

(*Shloka 266-34*).

The painting in the *Shri Tatva Nidhi* features a standing bejewelled and colourfully dressed maiden, sporting the side-bun coiffure. Anguish and pain are writ large on her face and the ladies-in-waiting are trying to console her. While one of them is fanning her, the others offer her flowers.

Similar is the *raga* Desakari. Here the romantic mood and situation have been carried a step farther. The *nayika* portrayed is *Vasakasayya*, the heroine eagerly awaiting the Lord on a bed, and also displaying sexual desire.

"The golden-hued maiden, perfect in all limbs, endowed with eyes reminiscent of lotus flowers, and flowing tresses, and heavy breasts, enjoying the company of her Lord, is the moon-faced *raga* Desakari".

This is how Desakari is described in the *Sangita Darpana*.

(*Shloka-265-33*).



Raga-s Bhoopali and Desakari

The *Shri Tatva Nidhi* painting of the *raga* features a bedroom in which a couple is making love on the cot, while the two attendants have delicately withdrawn and are slowly drawing the doors of the room.

Dipaka is another *raga* which provides an interesting contrast with the *Ragamala* pictures. This *raga* is always associated with heat and light. The *Ragamala* pictures feature two versions of this concept. In the first Dipaka is portrayed as a youth (sometimes resembling Krishna), seated with a lady in a pavilion and entertained by three musicians. It is a night scene, illuminated by lamps lining the parapet and other enclosing walls of the pavilion and also the roof. Flames are seen issuing from the jewels on the forehead of the youth.

In the other version the *raga* is portrayed as a youth dressed in red, riding an elephant, holding a lamp in his hand. The wildly-running, trumpeting elephant also holds a lamp in the tip of the trunk while an attendant sitting behind is waving a *chauri* and providing a mild breeze. But this differs from the characterisation of the *raga* in the *Sangita Darpana*.

The damsel, hungry for the love of her lord gets the lamps removed on his arrival, so that she can enjoy full bliss in the darkness, (because she is modest), but the ruby in his crown is so dazzling that it illuminates the environs and makes the maiden bashful.

(*Shloka* 235).

This is the theme portrayed in the *Shri Tatva Nidhi*. The scene is a bedroom; the ladies-in-waiting are moving out with the lamps, while the Lord seats himself beside the *Nayika* reclining on the cot. The jewels in his crown are shining; they illuminate the surroundings, and the lady has coyly turned aside.

Similarly the *raga* Kedara presents a picture far removed from the romantic version in the *Ragamala*. In the *Shri Tatva Nidhi* Kedara resembles

Dipaka and Kedara raga-s





Rishabha svaya

a portrait of Dakshinamoorthy—seated on a mountain and in a *Yogasana* posture, his knees bound by a *Yogapatta*, the stylised *jata* (matted locks) flowing behind, of the four one hand is holding a veena, another the *japasara*. Among the other two while the right hand is in the *Arala* gesture the left hand is holding a book. Sages, like Suka Sanandana, standing on either side, pay homage with folded hands.

Of special interest in the musical iconography of the *Shri Tatva Nidhi* is the section devoted to *svaya* and *tala*, elements which are not found in the *Ragamala* pictures. It is natural that the mind which worshipped the *raga* as a divine form should similarly recognise its existence in other elements of music like *svaya* and *tala*. As already stated, the idea of investing the *svaya*-s with divine attributes is as ancient as the *Brihaddesi* of Matanga. But the concept itself may be even older. The earliest pictures of *svaya*-s are to be found in the illustrations of Jain *Kalpasutra*-s. But these do not seem to have caught the fancy of the artists as the *raga*-s and their family did.

In contrast with their counterparts in the *Kalpasutra*-s the portraits of the *svaya*-s in the *Shri Tatva Nidhi* are more refined and feature greater detail. The *Sangita Upanishad Sarodhara* characterises the *svaya* Rishabha thus:

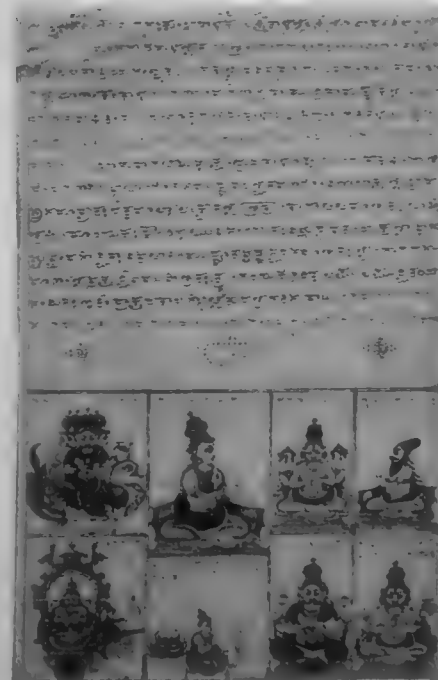
He is endowed with one head and four arms; two of which hold lotus flowers while the other two play the veena. His body is blue in colour and his guardian deity is Agni (fire). He was born at the Sakadvipa and praised by Brahma and exudes the *Hasya rasa* (laughter) and rides on a bull . . . the *svaya* Rishabha.

(Ch. III, *Shloka* 44-45)

Against this the portrait of the same *svaya* in the *Shri Tatva Nidhi* features the following attributes:

He was born on a Friday, the second day of a *Shuklapaksha*. His birth star is Chitta in the *rasi* (zodiac sign) of Tula (Libra). He is a *kshatriya* (warrior) by caste and belongs to the dynasty of the Rishis and

Dhruva tala



the Vedagotra. He shines like gold and his guardian Rishi is Brahma and the *Chhanda* (metre) is Gayatri and he portrays *Adbhuta rasa* (wonder). He was born on the Sakadvipa and is endowed with three heads, six eyes, six ears, six arms and two feet. He is riding a Lion on the crest of the Mahanasa mountain from which is issuing the river Anagha. The mountain itself is floating on the Dadhi Samudra (sea of curd). Dressed in *pitambara* he has applied the *agaru* scent and his favourite flower is the *champaka*. He is holding a *kunta* (dagger) and his favourite dish is *payasa*, offered by a Kinnara maiden to whom he is wedded and his age is seventy.

It should be noted that the original attributes in the *Sangita Upanishad Saradhara* have multiplied nearly three-fold in the *Shri Tatva Nidhi* portrayal, which is a composite picture. The *svara* Rishabha, while holding the centre is surrounded by miniatures of the several attributes like the birth star, the zodiac sign, the metre, the guardian deity, not to mention the vehicle and the several attendants. Each of these is no doubt a complete picture in itself, but collectively they make the entire composition a rich artistic piece.

The portraits of the other *svara-s* are on similar lines. But those relating to the *tala-s* are significant. While the pictures of the *svara-s* are rare, those of *tala* are rarer still. One possible reason may be that while *raga-s* and even *svara-s* could evoke an emotional reaction that could somehow be translated into a picture, the reaction evoked by rhythm was possibly too abstract for a pictorial concept. However the portraits of the *tala-s* in the *Shri Tatva Nidhi* feature similar attributes like the *svara* and *raga*. The Dhruva *tala*, for instance, is described thus:

He is born on a Sunday and of a Goat,
And his *rasi* (zodiac sign) of birth is Karkataka (Cancer)
He belongs to the group of *deva-s* (gods) and is white in colour, with large eyes and dressed in clean clothes.
He wears a necklace of precious stones and is under the power of Hrinkara, the Brahmi *shakti*.
He is accompanied by Koundinya rishi and also Vishnu and his metre is Anushtup.
He belongs to the Brahmin caste and is seated on the Plakshadvipa and exudes the *Shringara* sentiment.
He has three *anges* or sections like *divyalaghu* and a dual *laghu* that is the *tala* Dhruva.

In the picture of the *tala-s* like the *svara-s*, the dramatic element of the *raga-s* is absent. The figure of the *tala* is seated in the centre and on either side are the miniature pictures of its several attributes. In the picture of the Dhruva *tala*, for instance the figure itself is in profile, seated in the centre, with outstretched arms and the palms closing over one another. On his left is the four-headed Brahmi *shakti* riding a swan and on the right Vishnu and Koundinya rishi. In the bottom are: Sun, suggesting the day of birth, riding on

the single-wheeled chariot; the crab suggesting the zodiac sign of birth; a god suggesting the Devagana; the goat out of which he was born; and portraits of Pushya the birth star, and the Anushtup metre respectively. The picture of Dhruva *tala* is a panel, where though each component is a beautiful picture in itself, together they all build up the atmosphere and the character of the theme in its totality.

The six other *tala-s*—Matya, Roopaka, Jhampa, Triputa, Atta and Eka that constitute the Sooladi sapta *tala* combining with the Dhruva, and currently in use in Karnatic music, have been portrayed on similar lines.

Notwithstanding the refined portraiture, the sensitive craftsmanship and the imaginative execution of the ideas, the esoteric significance of these paintings is not known. And such a possibility may have been there. This is attested by the *bija mantra* (mystical syllables) given to these *svara-s* by Jagadekamalla which perhaps formed a part of propitiatory rituals. Though the human imagination has multiplied their attributes in course of time these paintings seem to reflect the basic object of the concept that is to serve as a symbol for contemplation and worship for any one eager to acquire a knowledge of or gain control over the various branches of music through rigorous *sadhana*. And they strictly fall into the concept of *sagunopasana* which is inherent in Indian thought. And this is apt too because the *Shri Tatva Nidhi*, as I have already stated, is a pictorial digest of our ancient religion, knowledge and culture, of which music, we need not add, is an integral part.

(I wish to express my thanks to Dr. G. Marulasiddaiyya, Director, Oriental Research Institute, Mysore for providing me with facilities to study and photograph the work and to Shri B. Kesara Singh for the photographs.)

Schoenberg in Several Ways

Lou Harrison

Quite recently, in California, a sort of "popularity-poll" was posted in a large record shop which purveys to every sort of taste. Arnold Schoenberg turned out to be the composer to whom the customers "least liked to listen".

This startling information tells us several things. The first among them is that the large majority of music lovers in at least this region of the world find him currently irrelevant to the hoped-for future. One remembers the recent search among young Usonians for an "alternative" culture, nature-oriented, folk-rooted, earth-built, conservationist, humanistic, and sometimes ecstatic. Schoenberg's sources nowhere connect with this development. Ives' perhaps yes, Schoenberg's no. At the most serious higher level, in the realm of music theory, a number of composers and theorists join this group in omitting his thought from the hoped-for future. In short, he is unpopular indeed, right here and now.

Still, Schoenberg's actual reputation among professional musicians is unquestioned, freely granted, and followed up by the duty of performance and recording, and this response of the professional body is perhaps an expected one, for Schoenberg was in the highest degree a professional. His concern for the stability and substance of our musical art was enormous, and his direct action about the work of other musicians, his peers and predecessors both, was altogether extraordinary. Perhaps the most penetrating, emphatic, and beautiful orchestration (as such) ever made is Schoenberg's of the Brahms "Quintet in G-Minor". It has justly been called Brahms 5th Symphony. His lovely and fascinating "Cello Concerto", after Georg Mathias Monn is exemplary, and he sponsored and worked for the music of many of his peers and pupils. In all this he was superbly professional.

I myself, when young, encountered it. In that time when his 12-tone style and the neo-classicism of Stravinsky were still regarded as inimical, I by intent took to him (as one of the first of my works to show him) a work in neo-classic style. He never batted an eye. His criticism, suggestions and aid about this work was to me one of the revelations of the Seminar which I was attending. Again, having heard that he would not accept 12-tone works, but also writing one and having genuine trouble in it, I took that to him. His brief hesitation, and his quiet inquiry, "Is it 12-tone?", were exemplary in their control (if indeed I had been well informed) and his immediate plunge into sympathetic and very valuable help and advice could not have been more cordial and genuine. In both cases the excellence of his mastery, musicianship, and professional care were plain to all.

Again, at the collapse of the kind of European civilization of which he was a part, in the 1st World War, he did not, finally, stop composing though he did pause (as did Debussy and others too) but, rather thought his

way through to a way to continue (the 12-tone method) and at the same time reached back to retrieve the classic spirit and forms for his present use. Ives had a very special problem and did not survive that war as an artist, though he lived several years beyond Schoenberg. In short, this spirited and brilliant and brave Viennese was as a human character most extraordinary indeed.

We are everywhere startled—his rapid advance out of Brahms and Mahler when he was young, establishing almost at once in *Vorklarte Nacht* his idiomatic mastery, his conquest in *Gurrelieder* of the "grande machine". In seminar one day he remarked that as a young man he had decided to write the "biggest" concert piece ever and set about forthwith. This was the *Gurrelieder*. His founding of the Society for Private Musical Performances (the uninvited could not join!), his lifting the technique of European composition by his bootstraps, (no matter in what haste, or in the end how erroneously for others), and, finally, his wholehearted joining us in the United States to create some of the choicest of his works and complete his life in very new circumstances; this is all admirable. Then it must be the air and sound of his music itself that is now out of kilter to many. It may be that some of that feeling about it is transitory, but then some may indeed be permanent. During my own adolescence, I went through a period, perhaps several periods, during which I would barely study or listen to any other music than Schoenberg's. So powerful and exclusive was the attraction that all other musicians seemed somehow quite minor. This attitude must have been reinforced by Henry Cowell's saying in public that Schoenberg was the greatest composer since Beethoven. Well, what I liked about the music was its intense self-contained musicality. For it seemed to me that those small mobile melodies, so swiftly and adroitly developed, imitated, inverted, retrograded, collapsed into chords, augmented, ornamented, contracted, or otherwise treated, did create a closed garden of purely musical interest, purely musical existence. In a sense this remains true, and for others as well—and is this not some part of the problem?

Only recently have I begun to listen again to Schoenberg's works with any other need at heart, and I find that I had not noticed much the larger expression (the social content, either) of those pieces. I am surprised to discover that much of his early music now seems to me melancholy beyond Tchaikowsky, and that this grew into agonies vented in screams, but that there was no tragic expression, which required transcendence. Yes, in the "Transfigured Night", there is that beautiful passage of transfiguration, but how many of us have finally realized that it could not have been "transcendence", since the piece continues on, as though nothing had happened, for nearly half again its length? The *Gurrelieder*, it is true, richly glows with deeply personal and mythic beauty, but then ends with a mother goose story followed by a primitive sunrise chorus—the *Waldaubesied* somehow turns into cock's crow and chicken feathers. I rudely exaggerate, of course, but, still, something a little like that does indeed take place. Again, *Moses and Aaron* is a mystical theological tract housed in some of the century's most brilliant (and difficult) professional music writing. At times, in the early period, his music sounds like the ideal accompaniment

to movie spy stories or murder melodramas. Indeed, he actually wrote music to be used for movie accompaniment. Fairly early he was able to compose music which still has an air of dangerous mystery. And was not Vienna, at that time, truly a dangerous mystery? A ramrod and confessedly immobile Emperor ruled a very old empire gone guiltily sensual and more than slightly masochist. He awaited only the insult which did indeed turn up to bathe the whole planet in its very first blood-bath of the century. One or two centuries of superb musical and other kinds of culture had brought to Vienna the confidence, permissiveness, glamour and individuated quirkiness that we look back to with nostalgia and admiration. The immense inner tensions and terrors of the actual scene, however, we now understand in "Erwartung", Klimt's "Judith II", Sigmund Freud, and Adolf Hitler. The shrilling, piled-up 4th chords of Schoenberg's "1st Chamber Symphony", the effort to "contain" the work in only one movement (and still to include all that a symphony should include and, not least, the fact that it was written, not for a standard large imperial orchestra, but, rather, for a compressed and individuated chosen ensemble; all these alert us to the nervous and social reality of what it must have been like then in the capital of the "Holy Roman Empire".

And then it all exploded! Schoenberg stopped for a while. When the whole, awful war was over, he took stock, he squarely examined the principal problem of equal temperament, which is that there is no tonality in it, and then invented the "method of composing with 12-tones" as he called it, or Serial Teknic as it is now called. With this means he enabled himself to continue composing in good conscience. The European world was permanently changed and within the teknic he used (after a first fumbling wind quintet) Schoenberg established the classic formal methods and relatively calm, "normal", manner in which the major works of his maturity were composed. The kinetic energy in these works is controlled, entirely reasonable, indeed form-building, and it is the latter fact which makes possible the classic shapes found in the 3rd String Quartet, the Piano Concerto, the Variations for Orchestra and a few other works. For him—and it turned out that for many other composers too—his 12-tone method sufficed. To understand what he did, and what proved engaging to others, it is necessary to take a synoptic view of a fairly large section of European music history. We will do this.

From the triumph of the violin over the viols, in 1700, the European tonal system rested firmly on the Syntonon Diatonic—the "natural" intonation of the major scale. This seven-tone scale was the basis of it, and the entire system included seven "sharps" and seven "flats", which respectively raised and lowered the original seven tones by one "half-step" each. The flats and the sharps were different, they were not the same tones. C# is lower in pitch than Db. The whole system was indeed very much like the matrix of 22 *srutis* in India out of which mostly seven-tone Modes are made. Until the late nineteenth century this was the orderly state of affairs. However, for about a century, the use of 12-tone equal temperament had been gaining ground in the tuning of keyboard instruments. Composers continued to use the old key signatures implying 21 tones, but gradually

began remoter "reachings", more startling modulations, and a much greater dissonant saturation. The triads were passing away, the Tertian Era ending. Helmholtz had predicted that this would happen and indeed all that he predicted came true. Schoenberg confirmed 12-tone equal temperament absolutely when he established his method. He abandoned the flexible, and kinder, 21 tones, and within the reduced means (9 tones lost!) and the irrational tuning of 12-tone equal temperament, he established a way of composing by substituting an order of succession for a hierarchy of relationships such as the previous system possessed. It was a bold and disturbing step, and only partly conscious, but it confirmed for modernists a theory and a procedure that was widely welcomed in the mid-century. The plain fact is that Europe has made such a heavy investment, in every way, in 12-tone equal temperament, that it is doubtful that Schoenberg could seriously have thought of simply returning. After all, this was the age of streamlining and speed and if string quarters can't play equal temperament (and they cannot) then just pretend that they can and get on with it. Again, we may not forget that for many centuries South-East Asia—Thailand, Cambodia, Laos—has maintained, and continues to practise, 7-tone equal temperament. Schoenberg's "serial" method can as easily be applied to this tuning system as to the greater number of tones.

Now, there was a countermove to this overriding European dogma. Julian Carrillo, in Mexico, at the end of the 19th century was beginning his search into many small intervals—equal temperaments of 8th and 16th tones, and smaller, and in odd numbers, too.

George and Charles Ives in the U.S.A., at the same time, were testing 1/4 and other fine tones. In about 1915 Henry Cowell propounded the over-tone series as the master musical "Gestalt" in his remarkable book "New Musical Resources", and in 1925 Harry Partch composed a string quartet in just intonation. All this was of immense importance and was immensely ignored, because in those days "status" in western music was conferred from Europe alone.

And Europe itself continues under the Schoenberg confirmation. Only Carl Orff employs the suggestion of other intonational references—but he only refers, he does not do it. I am not alone in noting that all this has happened before. In the late 17th century the 12-tone equal fretted viols absolutely dominated the intellectual and prestige worlds of European music. The "Fantasias" of the period, for chests of viols, are very disturbing to listen to today, for equal temperament on bowed viols is in truth unsettling and uncomfortable and wandery and, at least in part, ugly. The violin, with its sweet, just intonation, won hands down in about thirty years (and from common sources), over the crabbed, intellectual, and stylish viols in all their equality of tone and temperament.

Here we are again. I myself have no doubt that the stirrings created by Henry Cowell and by that great genius Harry Partch will very easily win in this same scene being played again, and that in addition we will win a new and blessed relief from enjoined masochism, among other rewards.

Actually, one can put it this way about the 20th Century of European style—firstly, 9 tones were lost and the rest thrown quite out of tune; then (after W.W.II) kinetic rhythm was lost, or abandoned, along with form and intention. All this culminated in the Hippy high-volume movement, which aimed consciously at the destruction of hearing. Almost any "Western" music teacher today will confirm that an astonishing number of his or her students suffer impaired hearing. Well, that's an end to it, of course, the ears themselves!

So that—we are perhaps ready, about now, for Schoenberg's wonderful "Society for Private Musical Performances". How I, for one, have longed these late years to give a concert only to the invited or, more importantly, to the "examined", (publically appointed times for "exams" naturally!) for why should we not, after his lead, try to determine whether our work is going out to understanding ears? Society is wide, the United States are various, and cheerfully chaotic. We can all make use of the idea that minority musics, minority audiences, and minority concerns generally are true ornaments and enrichments of our body social.

Henry Cowell, ever so often, used to speak of some fascinating idea that he had had, and when asked how one could find out more about it, might respond—"Well, I haven't made it public yet". What a wonderful phrase!—to "make it public"—and it suggests, too, that there is a borderline about these matters. He told a story about Leopold Stokowski. The Maestro, on a world tour, and just then in India, wanted to hear a performance by a renowned Indian musician of whose marvels he had heard. He was very graciously received, and put up in the palace of the Maharaja to whose household the famed artist was attached. A day or so passed and Stokowski, chomping at the bit, asked when he might have the pleasure of hearing the great Indian musician. The Musician's assistant appeared and said: "It is understood that in your own country you are a famous and great artist; and, because of this, the training period before you may hear this man will only be 6 months instead of the usual year". Henry used to tell this story with relish, and surely Schoenberg would have delighted in it, too.

How distant he seems—Arnold Schoenberg in Vienna—and the concerns of a corrupt and disintegrating Europe. Still, how very close he seems, too (at the privacy of our pianos) in his insistence on musical awareness, in his good humor (for he was good humored, and his liquor bills were high) in his stubborn confidence in the strength and the importance of intimate musicality.

Notes on the Restoration of a Temple Theatre for Sanskrit Drama

Clifford R. Jones

Restoration and Rediscovery

The great temple theatre, or *kuttambalam*,¹ for the ritual performance of Kutiyattam Sanskrit drama in the Vatakkunnathan temple in the city of Trichur, Kerala, has recently undergone a partial restoration, a task which will be fully completed within the next few years.

In recent years there have been occasional performances of Kutiyattam outside of Kerala in cities such as Madras, New Delhi, Banaras and Bombay. Thus the art-conscious public now has some familiarity with this authentic art of Sanskrit theatre which has survived in Kerala. With increasing interest have come a few new published articles on the subject; however, little so far has been reported concerning the theatres specially built for Kutiyattam during the thousand years or more of the history of the Chakyars' art of Sanskrit drama.

The temple theatres now standing are datable only to the late medieval period; however, it is a proven fact that they follow the canonical injunctions of the *shastras*. What is even more significant is that they are acoustically perfect, logical, architectural solutions to the requirements of the theatre tradition which they serve and its cultural and climatic environment. Above all, they are beautiful structures, to be ranked with the finest theatre architecture of any nation.

In recognition of the need for fundamental research and preservation of such rare and unprotected arts, the Smithsonian Institution recently provided the means to assist in the restoration of the Vatakkunnathan *kuttambalam*, one of the major temple theatres for Kutiyattam Sanskrit drama. The undertaking was carried out on a cooperative basis with the Cochin Devaswom Board, furthering the work of their temple restoration program. The Cochin Devaswom Board is one of the few local institutions which have taken steps to preserve the heritage of medieval temple theatre architecture in Kerala.

The *ranga mandapa*, or stage pavilion, was given priority and work began on the considerable task of removing the heavy layers of soot that covered the inner ceiling above the stage. This soot is an inevitable result of the use of the *vilekku*, an oil wick-lamp, for lighting the performance.

¹ *Kuttambalam* is also spelt as *Koothampalam*.

After a full week of continuous cleaning, the elaborately carved ceiling began to emerge, revealing a fully polychromed inner entablature of teak-wood, replete with carved narrative reliefs of such epic and puranic subjects as the Coronation of Sri Rama, the Churning of the Ocean of Milk, royal battle scenes, etc. Above these were revealed thirty-two carved brackets with engaged sculptures of Gods and heroes, among them the ten *avatars* of Vishnu, a series of four figures depicting the characters in the story of Kiratarjuniyam, and independent figures of Sri Lakshmi, Parasurama, Narada, Mahavishnu, Bhagavati, Siva, and Hanuman. The ceiling and additional architectural courses are executed in floral and abstract patterns. In the very center of the coffered ceiling, a red lotus is carved in the middle of nine designated squares representing the Dikpalas, or guardians of the directions. The red lotus here is symbolic of the Creator Deity Brahma who presides over the stage at the center of his reflected creation. The pigments used in the painting are hand-ground mineral and vegetable colors in a range from rich earth reds and olive greens to brilliant orange, vermillion, and golden yellows.

The now fully revealed seventeenth century ceiling is clearly of an earlier period than the last recorded restoration of the theatre, which occurred late in the last century. The excellence of the craftsmanship in carving and the nearly completely preserved painting is very rare. Unfortunately, the painted ceilings of other temple theatres, at the Kudalmanikkam temple, at the Guruvayur temple, and at several other temples, have been almost completely destroyed.

Carved brackets and decorative and narrative courses. The lowermost panel depicts priests carrying pots of holy water to the coronation of Sri Rama.



A corner of the carved ceiling of the mandapa over the stage

Two important parts of the final work on the stage were the restoration of the damaged copper *stupika*, or finial, above the roof of the stage, and the complete cleaning and polishing of the twelve magnificent pillars supporting the carved ceiling above the stage. The pillars are turned and lacquered in brilliant red-orange with the color and polished surface of a winter persimmon. Fully revealed in their brilliance from beneath layers of grime, the pillars now give an architectural illusion which seems to enlarge the stage area. Further, the lamp light reflected upon the pillars at night during a performance echo and complement the vibrant red-orange of *tecci* garlands which are a part of the traditional costume of the actors and actresses.

By carefully making tests for vestiges of the earlier painting, the *adhishtana* or socle of the stage was successfully repainted in the same type of flat water-based resinous pigments as the original, and in the original colors. The combination of velvety painted surfaces with the high polish of the lacquered pillars in pure unadorned geometric forms, contrasting against the ornate, highly articulated and richly painted and carved ceiling, is a lesson in traditional aesthetic taste and sensibility. This is a feature too often missing in traditional classical theatre performances today. The perfect balance of the architectural elements, with their rich contrasting color accents, creates the perfect spatial environment, degree by degree, in preparation for the more ornate, embellished, and gilded costumes of the actors in the drama.

This restoration of at least a part of the elegance of the traditional environment of the classical stage is but a beginning. There are other temple theatres in Kerala, some older and even more elegantly carved and embellished, which today stand neglected, slowly disintegrating for want of repair. It need not be so. The informed and discriminating patronage of

the past can continue if a truly concerned and sensitive audience can be reached.

A Royal Inscription

The reconstruction of the Vatakkunnathan temple theatre, one of the most massive in plan and ambitious in execution, was last undertaken at the end of the nineteenth century, which marks the transition from an era of traditional royal patronage into the changing period of modern Indian society in Kerala.

The inscription relating to this reconstruction, the latest so far discovered relating to the construction of temple theatres in Kerala, is found in the *kuttambalam* itself. It is located on the base of the first main pillar to the right of the southern entrance to the temple theatre. Its style is, for such a late date, an anachronism which gives it even greater interest as a kind of commentary on the end of an era. The inscription is in Sanskrit for the first two lines and heavily Sanskritized Malayalam for the last two lines.

Translation:

The merciful protector of the earth, who like the unwaning moon is without blemish, by whom enemies are destroyed with bow and (the four) limbs of the army, ordered the new theatre to be made in the temple of Vatakkunnathan by the wise gem among the Brahmanas devoted to the Lord Sankara.

This castle, is it not like a playground of the Goddess of Prosperity; a lotus for the actor's beetle-like eyes; which destroys the pride of Trikuta (the triple-peaked mountain)? It is even greater than the heavens.

By order of the King of Cochin, the virtuous Divan Sankunni Menon, with pleasure caused a *kuttambalam* without fault to be built by the Velanezhi Brahmana in the perfect abode of Siva. Anyone who beholds it (will exclaim) with wonder: Ah! (It is) like the Kailasa mountain!

In the abode of Siva (the Destroyer of Time) on the first day of the Kollam Era 1055 (1880 A.D.) the King of Cochin, great protector of mother earth, without faltering, having caused the construction of the *kuttambalam* to be completed, then at once caused copper sheathing to be affixed with proper devotion, (thus) he attained virtue in ample measure. For the great, oh! what is impossible?



Inscription recording the rebuilding of the Vatakkunnathan temple theatre by the Maharaja of Cochin in the nineteenth century

The above inscription demonstrates perhaps the last expression of a great tradition in patronage. The style of the language is in the old tradition of royal eulogy. In a kingdom scarcely a quarter of the size of present day Kerala State, the ruler was still referred to as the "protector of mother earth". The simile of likening the temple theatre to the "triple-peaked mountain" follows the great tradition which speaks of the temple or palace as a veritable Kailasa, reaching to the heavens; the *Natyashastra* compares the interior of the theatre to a mountain cave. The comparison of the stage and the actor's eyes to a lotus with bees or beetles is also in the poetic tradition of an earlier age. The Nambutiri Brahmana master architect is referred to as a "gem among Brahmanas". These expressions, which have long since faded from the present with the last disappearing vestiges of the medieval Hindu tradition in Kerala, have a certain nostalgia.

The master architect is known by his family name of Velanezhi which is a Nambutiri *mana* located near Painkulam, the home of a branch of the Koyappa Chakyars, one of the famous hereditary families of actors of Sanskrit drama.

There is a legend connected with the rebuilding of the Trichur temple theatre. It is said that the previous theatre had been long in a decaying state, but that none of the experts consulted would undertake the responsibility of reconstruction as it was too large and too complex a structure to replace accurately. The Velanezhi Nambutiri, undaunted, lay upon the floor in the center of the theatre hall in meditation until he memorized the relationship of every minute part and proportion of the entire structure from base to finials. As the story is told, "He had rebuilt the theatre in his mind!" Then, "The entire superstructure was dismantled, the unsound parts replaced, everything made ready. Then in the space of a moon the entire theatre was reassembled without a nail". It is true at least that the total wooden superstructure is joined by morticing and pegging with wooden pins and piercing rails (*valaya*). The copper sheet roof however does have copper nails. Nonetheless it is an interesting tale.

Such tales, aside from their "mystery", carry with them the fame of the architects of the past, a still precariously surviving tradition which perhaps reached its peak with the reconstruction of the temple theatre at Trichur. Since that rebuilding, only one total reconstruction of a temple theatre is known—at Tirumuzhikulam, 1945—in which the forms and proportions of the tradition have been continued, but the media have been altered to suit the times. Concrete with its permanence and greater economy has replaced teak and dressed stone almost completely. The entire base with its traditional mouldings, the stairways on the east, west, north and south, with their *vyala* faces and curving tongue-like faceted bannisters, and the classic chamfered pillars of the interior, are all of finely finished modern reinforced concrete. The teakwood superstructure of the roof follows the past tradition. The superstructure of the stage is uninspired but correct and workmanlike. The fine orange lacquer and the polychroming are missing, but we are as yet spared the use of modern enamel paint.

An End or a Beginning?

The tradition of building temple theatres may possibly end with this last *kuttambalam* at Tirumuzhikulam. The survival of the Chakyars' dramatic tradition and the temple theatres in which it has been performed for hundreds of years is still in the limbo of a changing society and cultural pattern. The institution of the temple complex as a school of higher learning in philosophy, religion, and the arts, as a major economic structure, as a place of aesthetic experience and amusement as well as a place of worship, is changing rapidly all over India. The survival of these traditions of the temple in the emerging socio-cultural pattern in Kerala is precarious at best.

Kutiyattam, the only known surviving form of Sanskrit drama, and the *kuttambalam*, the temple theatre for Sanskrit drama, stand today at the head of a continuous tradition that stretches back in time to at least the tenth century. Inscriptional data point to the earlier existence of the Sanskrit drama tradition in the Tamil country of the Chola period. A period earlier than this we cannot support with continuous historical documentation.

The logical immediate further source would seem to be the development of theatre art under the Pallavas. Beyond the two plays of this period attributed to Mahendravarma Pallava (*Mattavilasa* and *Bhagavadajjuka*) and still extant in the repertoire of Kutiyattam, we can only conjecture.

We know from tradition that at least a significant part of the source materials of the *Shilpashastra* texts now known in Kerala came from works existing in the Chola and Chalukya kingdoms from about the tenth century. We know that the forms and techniques, orientation and execution of the *kuttambalam* and the smaller *mandapa* it encloses, are in accordance with the cumulative tradition of *Shilpashastra* as it survives in the *Tantrasamuccaya* and *Shilparatna* in Kerala. The remarkable correspondence to aspects of the older tradition of theatre construction as given in the *Natyashastra* is evident as well.

That such a brilliant tradition of theatre architecture should eventually die for lack of patronage and responsible care and maintenance would seem criminal. The social pattern that developed and sustained the art of Sanskrit theatre and the construction of temple theatres in the canonical mode is now virtually gone. The needs and demands of society have changed, and change they will and must. However, the preservation, maintenance and development of the priceless art of the only surviving classical tradition of Sanskrit drama and its matchless theatres are now the responsibility of the new political, administrative, and economic elites that have replaced the feudal aristocracy in power and patronage. The assumption of that responsibility to protect the irreplaceable legacy of culture and art of India's past and present is a challenge and a test. When the Japanese speak of their ancient performing arts and distinguished artists as "intangible treasures", they eloquently express the value of these traditions which nothing can ever quite replace.

If the Tirumuzhikulam *kuttambalam* marks the last of the old tradition of building temple theatres, perhaps the construction of the new *natya-mandapa* soon to be inaugurated at Kerala Kalamandalam will mark a new beginning. It is designed and will be constructed under the personal supervision of Sri Appukkuttan Nair, a man of remarkable imagination and taste, who may well initiate a much needed new era in architecture for traditional theatre in India. The theatre is to be constructed on the principles of the classical texts on *Shilpashastra*. For perhaps the first time a public contemporary theatre for the purpose of performing traditional Indian theatre arts will be constructed in traditional Indian architectural style, rather than imitating the worst era of Western theatre building, which has too often been the rule in the past. Shorn of meaningless curtains, two-dimensional prosceniums, and invariably ugly painted scenery, the traditional Indian theatre in a new environment may yet regain its own identity in contemporary times as the supreme theatre of taste and imagination it truly is.

Dr. Jones is presently engaged in a project of research and documentation of traditional art forms, supported by a grant from the Smithsonian Institution, awarded through the American Institute of Indian Studies.

The Tradition of the Performing Arts

Kapila Vatsyayan

A mention of the performing arts of Asia, and particularly of India, immediately brings to one's mind the single-bodied and many-armed image of Durga or Siva in his form as Nataraja, ever destroying, ever creating new forms of the dance *Tandava*. These symbols in plastic form signify at one level the unified equilibrium, the still-centre, and at the other the continual play of "energy" and rhythm in multiple plural forms. The two aspects are inter-connected and mutually dependent. The varied art forms, like the multiple arms and hands, though distinct and separate, are all limbs of the same body: the seeming heterogeneity and multiplicity are the different modes of the *Tandava*.

And yet it is impossible to speak of the one monolithic tradition of communication through the arts, particularly the performing arts in Asia or India, or for that matter exclusively of forms which depend on verbal or non-verbal communication.

There are traditions of the performing arts in this geographical area and not a tradition: all are characterised by a staggering multiplicity of genres, form styles and techniques. Even the contemporary scene belies all classification in terms of the clearly-defined categories of western performing arts, namely into classical and folk, sophisticated, self-conscious, individual, artistic creation and popular collective activity; into spoken drama based on the word, musical notes or gestures or movement. Neither can they be classified into the neat categories of opera, operetta, symphony or chamber orchestra. Further, the insulation amongst different categories, so characteristic of western forms until the twentieth century, has been absent here from times immemorial. Will you call this the great tradition of Total Theatre or Oral Tradition or something else?

In spite of these complexities and the apparent picture of an eternal timelessness, which is repetitive, a close look reveals that each of these traditions (as prevalent in different regions of the continent and at different levels of society) can be clearly identified both in terms of the evolution of artistic form and style in time and its socio-cultural milieu in space. Layers of different moments of time can also be identified in a seemingly contemporary form. Characteristic of the cultural pattern within which the performing arts traditions flourished is a highly abstract approach at one level, an abstraction, (which guides the spirit of these forms and provides a fundamental unity or continuity and a sense of the timeless) and on the other hand an equal preoccupation with multiple concrete varied forms which accounts for change and continual flux.

Although it would be hazardous and difficult to provide an explanation for this seemingly contradictory phenomena of simultaneous static equilibrium and change and dynamism, it would be worthwhile to identify the underlying principles of 'commonalty' or call it universality of the cultural traditions of Asia, and particularly of the performing arts of Asia with special reference to India.

In order to arrive at some conceptual hypothesis it might be necessary to mention briefly the spatial and temporal situation of these arts.

The spatial situation can be seen both in terms of levels of society and the nature of performance. It can also be seen in terms of the geographical distribution of the different racial/ethnic linguistic groups.

In purely anthropological terms, the levels are tribal, village and urban; in artistic terminology they are sometimes called folk (or community or participative) and solo (or individual-artist-based, thus called classical). Although this is never explicitly stated, folk implies tribal/village/ and group-community while classical implies urban, sophisticated, stylised and individual/solo. These implied correlatives have been the cause of much misunderstanding regarding Asian or Indian arts. We shall presently examine the nature of such misunderstanding.

Nevertheless, let us begin only with a brief account of the tribal belt in India.

A pervasive tribal belt passes through all parts of India: the dances of these groups can be classified on the basis of anthropological, ethnological, racial types. Nearly fifteen million people of India belong to this category: their dance and music provides vigour and vitality to folk and classical styles.

There is the Himalayan belt from Kashmir to Himachal Pradesh, and extending to the eastern hills of Bhutan, Sikkim, Manipur, Assam, Mizoram. Amongst these are distinct tribal groups, ranging from the Gujars to the Bakerwals, and finally ending in the many tribal groups generally known as the Nagas. Chief amongst these are the Zeliangs, the Kukis, the Mizos, the Dailas, Semas, and the Aos.

Another tribal belt can be discerned at the foot-hills of the Himalayas, one merging into the great plains encompassed by the rivers Jamuna and Ganga. Amongst the tribes of the foot-hills and great plateaus, there are several which can be grouped together on account of their social structuring or their life-styles. Again, sub-groupings are possible: the tribes of the deserts and the plateaus of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh form one macro-group, while the others belong to the other racial strands such as Oraons, Hos, Marias and Santhals. There are then the tribes which inhabit the plateaus and the sea-shores south of the Vindhyas. Amongst these are some of our most ancient and primitive tribes, such as the Todas, the Banjaras, the Venedis, etc.

An analysis of the music and dance of all these fifteen or twenty million people leads us to the conclusion that these tribes make little or no distinction between verbal and non-verbal communication systems and techniques. Expression is total. When individual, it may be free, but in groups it is mostly conditioned movement or sound directly related to life-function and experience, that is to the hunt or other activity. Songs or dances are a form of participative activity, but not spontaneous in the sense of allowing free movement. These artistic forms are, like tribal society itself, highly structured.

Next is the stage of the food-gatherers, with shift cultivation and with a variety of magical, fertility rites: here the immediacy of life-experience is recalled in sound rhythm and movement. Dramatic action appears for the first time; naturally the spoken word and gestures assume a definite position. The fertility rites connected with the earth, sun and moon play a very important role here. The artistic form is conditioned not so much by the structuring of the tribal society as among the Daflas, the Aos, Marias, Hos and Oraons, but by the functions of the rite. All the pole dances of India belong to this category. The beginnings of procession, music and dance can also be traced back to the rites of the *Jhum* cultivators.

There is then the organised village society, whose history can be traced back to the Vedic concept of the *grama*. This is the organisational pattern in which eighty percent of the population of this country and perhaps of some other parts of Asia has lived and continues to live. These villages have been analysed from many points of view, both historical and sociological. Here music and dance has been woven into agricultural functions and is integrated with the daily and annual routine of the peasant. Many survivals and continuities of tribal society can be discerned in the agricultural rites connected with sowing, reaping and harvesting. These, along with many dances of propitiation, of magic and sorcery, can be traced back to an unknown antiquity. Thus a contemporary social community dance often contains in it elements of the original tribal or primitive function. Garba and Bhangra are typical instances.

Co-existent with the manifestations which are integral to the agricultural routine of the life of the peasant are artistic manifestations which are based on the two epics and the many Puranas of Buddhist, Jain and Hindu origin. For all of Asia there are these epics, then the Jatakas and also their own indigenous literature. The many pageants and tableaux and 'changing-locale forms' of dances and dance-drama developed from both the pure recitative word and its interpretation through gesture, mime and song. The local interpretation of the epics has been often considered as the permeation by the Great Tradition of the Little. However, it is often forgotten that these local or regional forms in turn shaped later literary versions of the epics. A history of the development of the Rama theme will make this amply clear.

Close to the village community, but a class apart, is a group of professional singers, dancers, musicians, actors, differently classified as

Bhands, Nats, Gandhervas, Vairagis, Binkaras. We find them all over India and even in some parts of Asia. This was and is a group for whom the performance was vocation, and not just a social, tribal or agricultural function. They were in and yet out of society. They were 'mobile'; they moved from place to place. It is this group of people which has been responsible for the mobility of ideas, forms and styles between village and urban centres. They have also been the vehicles expressing protest, dissent and reform; they have been the carriers of reform movements and the articulators of satire, social comment and thus they served as instruments of change. Contemporary forms such as the Bhavai, Nautanki, Therukoothu, Othanthulal belong to this group. In artistic form, their technique ranges from acrobatics to pure spoken drama. The word-gesture relationship is, however, minimal. Of late these forms have been termed folk-drama, traditional theatre, even street theatre, and folk dance. The essence of these forms, ranging from singing, puppetry, acrobatics, dance, and theatre lies in the social sanction given to their freedom and liberty they enjoy to make social comment. It is this which links them together.

There is finally urban culture, not necessarily modern, but city-based; it has grown out of the tribal/village culture and has, in turn, affected it. Forms, which developed within the framework of a strict social organisation and agricultural and other life-functions, are carried forward, taken over to the urban milieu; but this is done through a dissociation of the original function, or the integral relationship with the rigorous social structuring. Into the old form is instilled, added, admixed, superimposed, at will, a new literary content and a musical score. Classicity is the result. A mannerism and stylization is achieved through chiselling the earlier forms and structuring them in relation to word and sound. This then was the secret of those highly esoteric arts which did not lose their links with the earth and thus had in them the potential of continued rejuvenation, death and renewal with a marked rhythmic pattern of continuity and change.

At this level, those same epics, then the Puranas and the tales received a different treatment. The performers were professional or non-professional in terms of economic vocation but they were all dedicated academicians, committed to the arts as a discipline of life and thus of Release.

This multi-layered, multi-levelled pattern can be discerned in practically every region of India and in many parts of Asia, particularly Java, Bali and in some parts of Thailand and Burma.

Where then lies the distinction between strictly folk and classical forms? Can one postulate or arrive at a summing up on the basis of this descriptive survey? Perhaps it is hazardous, but worthwhile. It is an obvious but often not sufficiently understood situation.

Roughly it may be stated thus. The arts developed within the framework of a local or regional distinctiveness, one which cuts across socio-economic stratification. One notices a dialogue and interaction between

levels and often much overlapping. The movement is a two-way movement and not just the penetration of Great Art into popular levels. There is also a clearly identifiable pattern of communication among regions at particular levels. Thus there are two broad patterns: one a vertical oblong movement amongst forms of a particular region at different levels and socio-economic groupings and a horizontal spatial movement amongst regions where themes, content and forms have developed within a framework of continual communication at particular levels.

It will, nevertheless, be possible to identify contemporary artistic manifestation into tribal, village, semi-professional and urban and delineate the paths of communication and interaction amongst the tribal, village or urban forms of different regions and between the tribal, village and sophisticated forms within a region. Merely as an illustration, one might mention here that forms in Orissa, Manipur, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh provide an excellent opportunity for such an analysis. There is, for example, a connection between the forms of the tribals of Ganjam district, the Paiks, the dancers of Mayurbhanj, the performers of the Jatra, the Gotipuas of the Akharas and the Maharis of the temples in Orissa. Channels of communication between the Kali dances, those of the Devi cult, the Theyiat-tam, Koodiyattam, Kathakali can also be discerned. Alongside are the elements of commonalty, universality amongst sophisticated forms of dance, such as Odissi, Bharata Natyam, Kathak, and Manipuri, belonging to different regions of India.

This spatial situation has to be supplemented with a historical, temporal perspective where we see that the traditions of the plastic arts grew within a framework of inter-connection and inter-dependence as a self-conscious awareness and principle and not mere chance. While the Mohanjodaro civilization was an urban civilization, the Rigvedic society was pastoral and nomadic, with many inbuilt systems of social cohesiveness and mobility. The *Saman* was the meeting place of all. By the time of the Yajurveda, magic ritual gestures and the symbolic use of the body assumed importance. In the Samaveda, the concept of the *Margi* and *Desi* tells us of the acceptance levels. After the Vedic, both Vedantic and philosophic tradition and the Brahmanical, ritual tradition gave rise to unified abstraction in spirit and symbolic concretisation in form.

In aesthetics, this framework of the arts was recognised and articulated by the mythical Indian theoretician, Bharata in a period as early as the second century B.C. to the second century A.D. He conceived of the theatrical spectacle as a total amalgam of all media and genres ranging from spoken to sound music, vocal to instrumental, gestures, mime, decor and costumes and the inner state of being. He recognised these two levels of performance in the concept of naturalistic (*Loka-real*) and stylised conventions (*Natya*) of the stage. He saw style as a mode of presentation ranging from the grand, the verbal, to the lyrical, the introspective. He also recognised the emergence of the regional variants in the concepts of the *paravrtti*.

It is thus understandable that the codifier of the *Natya Shashtra* should begin his treatise by stating that he had created a fifth Veda by taking words from the Rigveda, music from the Samaveda, gestures from the Yajurveda and involuntary states from the Atharvaveda. In asserting that this would be a discipline, an art unrestricted for all classes and groups of society, he indicated the capacity of the arts to cut across all hierarchical stratification.

This and other formulations on the arts ranging from the second to the tenth century continue to subscribe to a world view which accepts the phenomena of the unity of a well-defined goal, a multiplicity of content operating in a framework of the inter-dependence of forms and styles between levels and regions. For the theoretician and the practising artist, both the unity and the fluidity principle were both an unquestioned, fundamental conceptual hypothesis as also a practical reality.

In course of time, while the sophisticated forms emerged as highly-stylised individual styles, alongside there grew a variety of forms and styles, local and regional in character. These came to be termed as the *Desi* forms. So prevalent and pervasive and powerful must have been the impact of these genres that the theoreticians and codifiers of the period between the tenth and thirteenth century included in their treatises a whole new category of artistic forms known as *Desi*. The *Desi ragas*, the *Desi Karanas*, the *Desi* forms of literature and painting all found a full and candid discussion in the texts of the period. A perusal of these texts convinces us beyond doubt of the strength and validity of the principles of a tradition enunciated initially in the context of religion and conduct. These are the concepts of the *Shastrachara* and *Lokachara*. The theoriser and codifier of the arts not only took note of popular developments but also gave them a theoretical and academic sanction. For this he had precedents and models in the sphere of religion, philosophy and codes of conduct.

These varied traditions had thus an inbuilt mechanism of acceptance of 'change', of variety, of modification within a well-defined system of the eternal. Timelessness and unity. The everchanging dynamic, innovative growth and development was complementary in conflict and counter-opposition. Tradition and contemporaneity, static equilibrium and dynamic change acquire a totally different meaning in this context. The one God assuming different forms: the one Goddess with multiple arms was the natural symbolic manifestation of such a world view.

The artistic forms in the Asian continent are an excellent indicator of this vision and must be studied against this background instead of against a background of continual annihilation of earlier forms and their replacement by newer forms in a linear order. A natural corollary of the above was a deliberate attempt to break the insularity amongst the different art-forms depending, in the main, on the word, on sound, gestures, mime, mass, volume, line and colour.

By the sixth century A.D. this was such an accepted axiom that the *Vishnudharmottarapurana* embodies the principles through the story of a

dialogue between a sage and a king. The king is taken through successive disciplines of rhythm, music, vocal and instrumental movement before he is considered fit to create images for worship. An analysis of any one act or any particular genre is thus only a study of a pair of arms or one particular aspect of the god and not totality itself. Despite this integrated approach, there is the recognition of the autonomy of particular media and each is dealt with separately.

While, therefore, it would be merely a partial exercise to analyse genres only in terms of their dependence on the word or sound or movement in isolation, it would at the same time be possible to cull out these elements against the background of the inter-dependence and inter-connections of forms within a region and amongst regions.

It would also be possible to discuss the different characteristics in both time and space of forms, which depended primarily on the body as a vehicle of communication as distinct from those which depended on the word. The word *Vak* was, nevertheless, primary at all levels and the oral tradition provided the basis of communication even when the word communicated not as a visual written experience but as an aural (heard) experience.

How do we identify these forms in different regions and at different levels in India and what are their chief characteristics? At the tribal level, style is evolved through emphasis on particular parts of the body, with particular limbs as macro-movement. This is unrelated to the word, but certainly related to life-functions. The artistic form is governed by single units of rhythm used repetitively. Thus while some tribal dances use the leg as a single unit, others use it as broken up into the movements of the thigh and the calf. While solo dancing may have an element of spontaneity, group dances are conditioned and delimited and it is this self-conscious delimitation which accounts for style and mannerism.

We can distinguish Nagas from the Marias and the Hos on account of these varied delimiting mannerisms and repetition of the movements where only some parts of the body and not all are articulated. At the village level the micro-movement of the hand-and-foot contacts begins to play a part. In the fertility rite dances, trance and magic play an important part. In some, many more parts of the body, with micro-movements, begin to play a part. The human body is also used symbolically and, in doing so, the aim is to arrive at an abstract design in space.

Music is more often than not an indispensable ingredient and is not restricted to singing by the dancers. A separate group of reciters and vocalists accompanies the dancers. The relationship between the word and the movement is loose, not tightly structured. The thematic aspects of these dance-songs range from fertility to agricultural functions, and to the presentation of stories from the epics.

When we move on to the community, professional, semi-professional theatre of the village street or court, we find that the relationship of word/

gesture has undergone a transformation. Now the relationship is much more rigorous: the theatrical spectacle depends on the spoken or sung word and its multiple interpretation through movement. The Ramalila and the Rasallila performances all over India are an example of this phenomenon. So also are dance-drama forms like Kathakali, Yakshagana, Bhama Kalapam. The opposite pole in street theatre are acrobatic dances which have no meaning or word-content and depend for communication on pure body skill.

The word-gesture relationship changes in sophisticated solo forms. Here the literary word is set to melodic line, a given metrical cycle and is then interpreted either descriptively or symbolically by the dancer. The styles commonly termed as 'classical' in the context of dance all use this principle: however, each can be distinguished from the other through a distinctive use of the human body as abstract design. Different geometrical motifs guide their articulation techniques.

Thus, the sophisticated or stylised forms which continue to be deeply rooted in village and folk culture evolved a methodology of communication which is strictly regional at one level and at another level universal on account of its abstraction. Examples of the pattern of evolution can be cited from all parts of India, but particularly from regions like Orissa, Manipur, Kerala, where a different layering and levelling of society still exists and is clearly identifiable.

One common principle which determines the nature of movement at both the village and the urban sophisticated level is the use of the human form as an impersonal instrument or vehicle of communication. Expression lies not in spontaneous free movement, but in achieving impersonality through the very personal medium of the body. Indeed, it is this one major factor which gives the Asian dance and dance-drama forms a quality which distinguishes them from other cultures.

How and when the Indian considered the body as an essential prerequisite for transcending the body is the total history of Indian thought. This is neither the occasion nor will there be enough time to go into the complexities of these thought processes as they manifest themselves in Indian artistic traditions, and particularly those which relate to the use of the human form for communication either in the plastic medium or the kinetic medium. The theoretical enunciation of this thought pattern was made by the early Indian aesthetician in the formulation of the *Rasa* theory which has guided the destiny of Indian art forms for nearly eighteen centuries. Scholars have dwelt at great length on different aspects of the aesthetic experience, the aesthetic content and the methods of communication contained in this theory. We shall not go into these aspects here. However, let us end by merely drawing attention to one single principle in this aesthetic, one which allowed for improvisation, innovation and change.

This was the principle of *Vyabhichari bhava* or what is commonly called *Sanchari bhava* in music and dance. Through the *Vyabhichari bhava* or *Sanchari bhava*, he could interpret the permanent or the dominant state

(*Sthayi bhava*) in as many ways as he liked and show the picture of the world with his own particular viewpoint without departing from the overall structure of the aesthetic theory.

The principle of eternity, of timelessness, and of flux, of an ever-changing in old and ever new or renew phenomena was inbuilt in thought at its most metaphysical levels and not at its most popular and common levels. This then is the pattern of the Indian performing arts. They can be the vehicle of any contemporary concern, but the contemporaneity must be contained within the continual reminder of the unseen, but very rare unity and eternity which underlies all phenomena.

News and Notes

Tyaga Brahma Mahotsavam, Thiruvaiyaru

Thiruvaiyaru is the land of five holy rivers: the Vennar, the Vettar, the Kudamurathi, the Kollidam and the Kaveri. The site is also known as the Panchanadi Kshetram, as Thiruvadi, and Dakshina Kailas. It is noted for two festivals: the Saptasthana Utsavam in April when deities from seven pilgrim centres converge on palanquins towards Thiruvaiyaru and the Tyagaraja Aradhana Mahotsavam in January. At the Tyagaraja Aradhana Mahotsavam thousands of musicians volunteer to sing at the *samadhi* without accepting payment of any kind; the recital becomes an act of homage to the memory of the saint composer. Since the eighth century when the Shaivaite apostles consecrated it with their *thevaram* hymns, the site has become a treasure-house of our music.

Tyaga Brahma Iyah attained *Siddhi* in the Parabhava Samvatsavam on Pushya Bahula Panchami, corresponding to the 6th of January, 1847. His swan song *Paramatmudu* (Vagadiswari *ragam*, *Adi talam*) and *Peritapamu* (Manohari *ragam*, *Adi talam*) signalled the inauguration of the Music Festival by the saint himself. His mortal remains were interred by his disciples in a *Tulasi Brindavanam* and his 24,000 compositions and *unchavritti bhajana* were preserved by them through their music for posterity.

The *aradhana* at the *samadhi* site is a more recent phenomenon, begun by Nagaratnammal, a courtesan of the Mysore palace. Before that, two major festivals used to be held at Thiruvaiyaru. The leader of one used to be Sulaimangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavater and of the other the violin maestro Govindaswami Pillai. But women musicians were debarred from participating in both these events.

Nagaratnammal could enlist the support of such a prominent public figure as Sir Annamalai Chettiar, (founder of the first music college in South India and also Founder-President of the Tamil Isai Sangam, Madras) and initiate the practice of holding the Festival on the *samadhi* site. The first *aradhana* festival organised by the Mahotsava Sabha was inaugurated by Rajaji. Soon a school was established at Thiruvaiyaru to propagate the compositions of the saint and Kadambam rice was distributed to the poor.

Another devotee of Tyagaraja, Sunderam Iyer, dedicated himself to the task of arranging for the inscription of the saint's *kriti*-s on marble slabs.

Thus the humble earthwork structure erected by Tyagaraja's disciples on his death-bed has been renovated over the years and the Aradhana Mahotsavam has now become an important musical and cultural event.

—T. SANKARAN

Anamika's Hindi Drama Festival, Calcutta, 20th to 31st December 1974

Anamika, which has been doing Hindi theatre in Calcutta for many years, organised an Exhibition, a Festival, a Seminar and a Workshop from 20th to 31st December 1974. This amateur organisation has an all-India standing and initially Shyamanand Jalan was associated with its activities. Nowadays the guiding figure is Smt. Pratibha Agrawal.

The Exhibition was very impressive for it illustrated with photographs every landmark in the Hindi theatre including a model of the stage used for the performance.

The Drama Festival opened with *Harishchandra Taramati* and other items by the Bharatendu Natak Mandali of Varanasi. Presented in the traditional style of our old-time commercial theatre, the performance was memorable partly on account of the voice projection and stage presence of the actors.

Anamika itself presented a historical play by Jaishankar Prasad. The production had neither the flavour of a period piece nor any contemporary edge. Because of the large number of scenes and the difficulties encountered by the actors in doing justice to the sonorous text, the presentation as such made no impact on the spectators.

The last work of Mohan Rakesh, *Paiyer Tale ki Zamin*, completed by Kamleshwar, had raised high expectations. It was presented by Rajendra Nath for *Abhiyan* of Delhi but the production did not leave any perceptible mark on the minds of the audience.

Dr. Laxmi Narayan Lal's *Vyaktigat*, as presented by *Yatrik* of Delhi and directed by M. K. Raina, was an altogether brilliant affair. But the warmest response of the participants was reserved for S. Vasu's production of *Aur Eka Yuddha* by the young Jaipur playwright Hamidullah. The play has a strong political bias and its raw and unsophisticated quality appealed to almost all the spectators.

The Workshop had been planned on ambitious lines. Most of us missed the presence of B. V. Karanth who had been invited but could not come. But we were happy to have Dr. Laxmi Narayan Lal and Shri Nemichand Jain in our midst and very excited that Badal Sircar could come and watch our productions on the last day.

The participants were asked to work on *Bayan ek Buddhuka*, a script by Ashok Mitran of Madras. It was a series of visuals revolving round man's loneliness, his desperate attempt to overcome it and find some meaning in life. The script provided for the use of varied sound effects drawn from daily life.

We were provided with a cast of local actors and after ten days work, we had to present our interpretation of the script on the campus of



the Shri Shikshayatan. We had the option to break, add or subtract from the script and to choose our own locale. Vibhukumar (Raipur), Dr. Satyavrat Sinha (Allahabad), Shiv Kumar Jhunjhunwala (Calcutta) presented their work in the canteen. Vimal Lath (Calcutta) drained the swimming pool and produced his work in it. Krishna Kumar and I chose the natural surroundings of the campus grounds for our performances. The number of actors we used varied from thirty used by Vimal Lath to a bare six employed by me

The shift from one place to another created some practical problems since an audience of eight hundred had to move from locale to locale to watch all these performances.

A major weakness in the organisation of the Workshop was that all of us did not spend any time together discussing the script before embarking on our production. We ought to have torn the script to pieces and then worked out our interpretations so as to avoid duplication and audiences would then have been exposed to really distinct interpretations of a common theme.

The total experience gained for the Workshop was rewarding for one could see that many of us separated in space seemed to be working in similar directions. There was the same pre-occupation with breaking the limits of the proscenium to reach out directly to audiences, with exerting the whole body to project a meaning and with extracting as fluid and flexible an interpretation out of a given text as was humanly possible.

—AMOL PALEKAR

Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards (1974)

This year fourteen distinguished artists in the field of music, dance and drama have been honoured by the Sangeet Natak Akademi.

The award for Hindustani vocal music goes to Shri Kumar Gandharva and for Karnatic vocal to Shri M. D. Ramanathan. Shri Nikhil Bannerji receives the award for Hindustani instrumental music (sitar) and Shri T. N. Krishnan for Karnatic instrumental music (violin).

In the field of dance the award recipients are Shri Kittappa Pillai for Bharata Natyam, Shri Gauri Shankar for Kathak, Kalamandalam Raman Kutty Nair for Kathakali and Smt. L. Ibemhai Devi for Manipuri.

In the sphere of drama, Shri S. D. Sundaram receives the award for play-writing, Shri Damu Kenkre for direction, Shri Tapas Sen for stage technique and Shri Pransukh Naik for acting.

Two well-known artists in the folk tradition, Shri Bhagban Sahu of Orissa and Shri Puna Ram (who has been associated with the Pandavani of Chhatisghadh), are also among the recipients of the Sangeet Natak Akademi awards.

Three eminent figures in our cultural world, Smt. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi and Shri Jnan Prakash Ghosh, have been elected Fellows of the Sangeet Natak Akademi.

Deaths

BEGUM AKHTAR, celebrated singer of *thumris*, *gazals*, at Ahmedabad on 30 October 1974.

PARUR SUNDARAM AIYER, well-known violinist and father of M. S. Gopal-krishnan, at Madras on 11 December 1974.

RASOOLANBALI, one of the foremost exponents of the Benaras *ang* of *thumri* singing, at Allahabad on 15 December 1974.

MASIT KHAN, veteran *tabla* player and father of Karamuttalah Khan, at Calcutta on 16 December 1974.

Book Reviews

PRACHEEN KAVYASHASTRA by R. P. Kangle, Mouj Prakashan, Bombay, 1974, Rs. 15.00 (*In Marathi*).

Professor Kangle's *Pracheen Kavyashashtra* is an introduction to and a critical survey of the most important doctrines in Sanskrit Poetics. Modest in size, the book is ambitiously comprehensive and brings into its purview important works in the field of Poetics and their authors; it covers the entire range of poetic and dramatic theories in Sanskrit.

The first chapter gives 'a brief history' and acquaints the reader, in chronological order, with Sanskrit authors and their works, pointing to their special doctrines and their contribution towards the development of Poetics. The author then proceeds to examine word, sense and poetic statement, style, literary merits and demerits, the figures of word and sense in poetic speech. In other words, he directs our attention to the topics which are concerned with the external form of literature and the principles of embellishment. The next two chapters are devoted to the presentation of the *Rasa* and *Dhvani* theories, which indicate the approach of Sanskrit Poetics to the apprehension of literary content and also its enjoyment. Such topics as the nature of poetic activity, the aims and objects of poetry, classification of literary works are treated in the following chapter. The last, the eighth chapter, is intended to evaluate Sanskrit Poetics as compared to Aristotle's *Poetics* and the Principles of Literary Criticism in English; it also touches on the impact of Western literature and theories on Marathi writers and the literary problems that are created by such an impact. The author feels that since modern Marathi literature follows new Western trends in the composition of its form and the choice and expression of its content, Sanskrit Poetics is hardly much use in an understanding and assessment of modern Marathi literary activity. Nevertheless, an acquaintance with this ancient *Shashtra* is necessary, according to the author, simply for its own sake and for evaluating early Marathi literature which came under the strong influence of Sanskrit poetry.

No true student of literature will be sorry if Sanskrit Poetics cannot provide a theoretical base and practical apparatus for judging modern regional literatures. Literature must grow on its own strength and forge new trends. Poetic theory, too, must shape itself to be able to understand and judge changing literary creations. It is possible that Prof. Kangle may not be exactly correct in his analysis and deductions about new literary problems in relation to Sanskrit Poetics. But this is neither the place nor the occasion to note differences of opinion in this area of thought. Prof. Kangle's aim in writing this book is only to present a broad outline of important doctrines in Sanskrit Poetics. He has deliberately avoided subtle details and controversies present in this *Shashtra* (Preface, p. v). It is within this limited programme that the book must be judged.

Prof. Kangle writes in a precise and unostentatious style. His grasp of this *Shashtra* is comprehensive and there is painstaking labour behind his study. We must take into account the mass of Sanskrit theoretical literature through which he must have been required to wade, the conflicting expositions and the variety of opinions that Sanskrit theoreticians present and their language which is at times not so easy to understand even to a Sanskritist. Considering all this, Prof. Kangle's effort at precision, at summarizing and surveying his material in the process of presentation, will appear quite admirable. He is at his best when the topic, in spite of all its details and ramifications, is uncomplicated. His first chapter on the historical development of this *Shashtra* and his chapters on *Guna*, *Dosha*, *Alamkara* are good examples of brevity and precision, compressing as they do a mass of information within a limited span.

But these qualities, I am afraid, are not useful in themselves in treating a scientific subject which involves its own concepts and terminology. An explanation of the latter, however brief, is the first requisite, I should think, before the outline of a doctrine is presented. The author does not always do this. He apparently assumes that the terms and concepts are familiar and simply states a principle or a thought. Sometimes the Sanskrit words appearing in the quotations are used as they are in the Marathi rendering: *Shana-sutra* (p. 50) or *Yoga* (p. 126). The first word needs a Marathi equivalent, and the second is used by Bharata in a special sense. In case of technical terms like *akashabhashita* (p. 141) and special words like *samvitti* (p. 93), *bhavakatva* (p. 92), some explanation of what they precisely mean would be more in order. The word *muktaka* is used on page 48; its explanation appears on page 138; yet there is no footnote to guide the reader's steps. There is, at times, far too much of brevity and also a tendency to take concepts for granted. This explains the lack of explanation or correlation of meanings which is apt at times to baffle the uninitiated reader. For example, this happens in the case of the term *udara* (pp. 47, 49) which is a technical name for a particular literary excellence (*guna*). On the other hand, terms like *Sattvika bhava* or *Vyabhichari bhava* are only partially explained.

Sometimes, the author's Marathi rendering of a Sanskrit quotation does not bring out all the shades of meaning of a word: *gramatika* translated as 'village' (p. 117) misses the force of the special grammatical suffix *ti* and *ka*; in the case of words like *pavaka* (p. 66) and *svaroha* (p. 68) the author has forgotten to provide the actual double meaning necessary in the context.

The studious attempt at brevity and compressed writing leaves the reader, at times, in a state of doubt because he is not sure whether a particular statement is a doctrinaire presentation or the author's comment on it. More baffling perhaps would be some of the author's own observations. For example, he states (pp. 137, 138) that Mammata's definition of *kavya* is only 'serviceable' and the criticism on it is 'somewhat technical'; he also remarks that Jagannatha's definition is 'nearly of the same type' as that of Dandin. These statements need elucidation if the author's judge-

ment is to be properly assessed. The author mentions that the dramatic types formally called *Samavakara* and *Dima*, which treat the theme of conflict between gods and demons, are rooted in folk-drama. This may be so, but the author is aware that such a drama had no fixed literary form; so its presentation must have been mostly in the form of mime. What justification or evidence then have we to assume that *Balibandha* and *Kamsavadha* which Patanjali mentions in a grammatical reference were productions of literary plays, as the author seems to suggest (p. 6)? I have my own reservations about certain points in Prof. Kangle's presentation of Abhinavagupta's exposition of the *Rasa* theory: the comparison of art-pleasure to divine ecstasy which Abhinava is stated to have accepted (p. 93); *yogi-pratyaksha* . . . *para-tattva* explained as a Yogin's ability to perceive directly the intellectual consciousness in other people (p. 94); the meaning of *samyoga* (in the *Rasa-sutra*) as one-pointed concentration in a poet's mind (of literary paraphernalia of *rasa*-composition) (p. 94); the meaning of *samvid* as *Atman* (p. 113). I am also not clear about the author's own opinion about the emotional impact of literature. The view that all *rasa*s are not exactly pleasurable is held by Ramachandra-Gunachandra. Abhinava has referred to it as the opinion of the Samkhya philosophers and has dismissed it summarily. Prof. Kangle says that tragedy moves the heart profoundly, while a mere presentation of pleasing events cannot; so an appreciative spectator would be more attracted to tragedy and what is implied here is that this is why tragedy is regarded as the highest form of literature (pp. 150-151). Is Prof. Kangle deducing the super-excellence of the tragic form or is he rejecting the view that literary art yields delight? Both implications would give rise to serious doubts.

I am inclined to think that if the book suffers somewhat it is more on account of its self-imposed brevity and the avoidance of explanation rather than on account of any lack of clarity or definiteness in the author's mind. But such a limitation was unnecessary, since Prof. Kangle himself calls his book a *prabandha* (Preface, p. vi; again, p. 139) and enters into an elaborate discussion and exemplification of the varieties of figures of speech, which in the high opinion of Sanskrit Poetics are characteristics of third-rate poetry. Prof. Kangle need not have chosen the role of a *bhashyakara*; but he could have been a *varttikakara*, since he was dealing with a *Shashtra* and scientific concepts. As the book stands, it is an admirable summary for one who has some familiarity with Sanskrit Poetics; to the uninitiated it is a neat compendium; it will whet his interest in the subject but perhaps fail to guide him when he is confused or baffled. All this could have been easily avoided by providing explanatory notes, and not mere quotations from and references to Sanskrit texts, and by a descriptive bibliography of additional reading material. There is a bibliography; but a list of Sanskrit texts, without any information about possible translations, is not going to help a Marathi reader. The list of English titles is inadequate. What is more puzzling to me is the studious exclusion of Marathi books on Sanskrit Poetics. Prof. Kangle, with his ability to read the original material in Sanskrit, does not need them. But what about his Marathi readers? When Prof. Kangle is prepared to go out of his way and list a Gujarati book on a topic in Sanskrit Poetics, why should he omit Marathi books, especially

when one of them won the Sahitya Akademi award and another the Maharashtra State award? A complete list of Marathi titles would not have created any doubt about the author's own knowledge of the subject, nor would it have deprived him of the singular credit of presenting in a small volume the history of Poetics as well as combining, like Vishvanatha's *Sahityadarpana*, the entire theory of poetry and of drama.

The Mouj Prakashan have an established reputation for excellent book-production and Prof. Kangle's book naturally occupies a proud place in their series. The only blemish is certain printing errors; unfortunately the Errata, too, has not taken care of all the misprints. Footnote no. 11 on page 149 reads, "The passage from *Politics* makes the meaning of purgation clear". This is a quotation from Potts and is intended to support the meaning of katharsis or purgation. The printer's devil, *Politics* instead of *Poetics*, is apt to raise hell.

—G. K. BHAT

INDIAN MUSIC by B. Chaitanya Deva, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Delhi, 1974, Rs. 30.00 (*In English*).

This is Dr. B. Chaitanya Deva's second book on music. The earlier book, *Introduction to Indian Music*, was published last year.

On perusing it, one is inevitably inclined to get the impression that the book is dilettantish, desultory and, therefore, disappointing. It appears that the author has not cared to study the authenticity of the information he has given. The book contains several mistakes in the definitions of the main technical concepts of Indian Music. He appears to be misinformed about even the generally accepted connotations of technical terms in ordinary usage. Wherever he has attempted to paraphrase Sanskrit terms, he has missed their inner content and given a literal meaning. In some places, he had contradicted himself. All told, one gets the feeling that the book has been released without proper editing and revision.

This book, published by the ICCR, is obviously meant for foreign consumption. But I am constrained to state with deep regret that unless this book is revised and all the mistakes rectified, it cannot be recommended for export as it contains misleading information.

This book has eight chapters including the Introduction. The chapters are entitled *Raga*, *Svara-Moorcchana-Mela*, *Tala*, *Forms*, *The Border Lines*, *Musical Instruments* and *In Retrospect*. Apart from these, there is a Glossary, Bibliography and Index.

To give a few examples of the wrong definitions of well-known terms, in the Chapter *Raga*; the *Melodic Seed*, the author defines *Bahutva* as multiplicity and *Alpatva* as scarcity. The above connotations are literal and one does not expect a scholar of Dr. Deva's calibre to interpret them thus. *Bahutva* in music means 'preponderance' and *Alpatva* means not 'scarcity' but 'infrequent usage' of a particular *svara* in a *raga*.

The author states in the same chapter that the Karnatic *raga* *Bilahari* corresponds to the Hindustani *raga* *Alaiya Bilawal*. Actually *Bilahari* omits both *Madhyama* and *Nishada* in the *Aroha* (ascent) and is, therefore, an *Oudava-Sampoorna* (Pentatonic-heptatonic) *raga*, whereas *Alaiya Bilawal* takes the *Nishada* unflinchingly and is a *Shadava-Sampoorna* (Hexatonic-heptatonic) *raga*. In *Bilahari* the *Komal Nishada* is used sparingly as it is a *Bhashanga raga*. It is a combination of Mohanam (*Bhupali*) in the ascent and Shankarabharanam (*Bilaval*) in the descent.

The author betrays a lack of familiarity with *raga*-s and an immaturity of approach. The distinction he makes between the *raga*-s *Asavari* and *Jaunpuri* is vague and inadequate. He states that "one would not stop on *Pa* in *Bhupali*". There are several well-known *khayals* in this *raga* where the *sa* is on *Pa*; these include *khayals* like *Jab heen sab nirapata*, *Eri aaj bhaiyi*, *Lalanara piya*, *Itana jobana para*. He states that the *raga* *Bhairava-Bahar* uses all the twelve notes! (page 11). It does not take *Tivra Madhyam* at all.

In the Chapter *Svara-Moorcchana-Mela*, the *Sama* scale has been misrepresented. He has shown *Atisvarya* as preceding *Mandra* whereas the very word *Atisvarya* indicates extremity, limit (*Ati* means extreme; *Svarya* means sounded)—the overall meaning being the lowest limit of the human voice. *Krushta* has been shown as the lower *Pancham* which is absurd. *Krushta* means to yell, to shriek; it is derived from the Sanskrit root *Krus*, and it is placed either as *Madhyama* or *Panchama*, that is the top note as the *Sama* scale was the descending one. The placement of *Atisvarya* as *Nishada* and before *Mandra* evidently shows that the author is completely unacquainted with the *Sama* scale. He should have omitted this reference completely.

In this chapter, while discussing the system of classification of Indian Music, that is the *Moorcchana-Jati* system and the *Mela-Thata* system, the author gives an extremely brief explanation of the two systems. The merits and demerits of these are also dealt with but too briefly.

While referring to the two *Grama*-s namely the *Shadja* and the *Madhyama Grama*, he states that the *Ma-Grama* was created because the *Sa-Grama* was "not found adequate for acoustic and musical reasons". This is not true. The actual reason for the necessity of the *Ma-Grama* was because of the lack of consonance in the *Sa-Grama* between *Ri* and *Pa* (*Ri-Pa samved*), whereas there were several *jati*-s which had *Tisrutik Panchama*. Also another error of commission is the statement that Bharata has mentioned the *Gandhara Grama*. In fact there is not a single reference to it in the entire *Natyashastra* as far as I am aware.

Thor Sangitkar illuminates the social and cultural background of the artistic life of the last century. It describes the tradition informing a particular musician's style, the special features of his mode of presentation, the thought process underlying it and other details of his performance. The work is thus a kind of source book. There is no theoretical generalisation as such. But Prof. Deodhar supplies the reader with a fund of information and this serves as a convenient starting point for those who want to draw certain theoretical conclusions from his descriptive account and analysis:

Most students of music have felt for a long time the need for serious critical works in music. The lacuna in this sphere has been filled by Prof. Deodhar's book. This entire series of articles served as a most valuable aid to me personally in the course of my preparations for my own book *Gharandaz Gayaki* (the English translation of the work is entitled *Indian Musical Tradition*). In the same way, Prof. Ashok Ranade could fall back on the material in this book when he wrote his *Sangitache Soundaryashastra*.

Prof. Deodhar has provided us with brief biographical data about nineteen great artists:

1. Pandit Balkrishnabuwa Ichalkaranjikar.
2. Khan Saheb Alladiya Khan.
3. Pandit V. N. Bhatkhande.
4. Khan Saheb Murad Khan.
5. Pandit Bhaskarbuwa Bakhle.
6. Khan Saheb Allauddin Khan.
7. Pandit Ramkrishnabuwa Vaze.
8. Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar.
9. Khan Saheb Abdul Karim Khan.
10. Pandit Vamanbuwa Chaphekar.
11. Khan Saheb Bundu Khan.
12. Khan Saheb Rajab Ali Khan.
13. Khan Saheb Fayaz Khan.
14. Khan Saheb Sinde Khan.
15. Surashri Kesarbai Kerkar.
16. Pandit Bholanath Bhatt.
17. Khan Saheb Bade Gulam Ali Khan.
18. Pandit Vishnupant Chhatre.
19. Pandit Khaprumama Parvatkar.

There are two other articles, one on Giovanni Scrinzy and the other on Faridsaheb Sitarmaker. The article on Dr. Scrinzy is based on close acquaintance with this musician and on what Prof. Deodhar himself imbibed of western music from him. The article is very useful as a guide to the study of western music.

The life span of each of these individuals is a drama in itself. There are germs of dramatic tension in many episodes in their lives. In most cases Prof. Deodhar has had personal contact with these musicians and

interviewed them at length about their lives. Much of the data regarding them is, therefore, accurate and reliable. Besides, since Prof. Deodhar is himself a musician of note he could frame the right kind of questions and elicit satisfactory responses for them. Without getting involved to any unnecessary extent, he could remain engrossed in the artistic dimensions of their comment and achievement.

The book bears testimony to Prof. Deodhar's own strong desire to understand the artistic merit of each of these musicians. And it also projects aspects of Prof. Deodhar's own personality as a serious musician and a remarkable individual.

With the single exception of Surashri Kesarbai Kerkar all the musicians dealt with in the book are no longer in our midst today. The work is a document recording an epoch in our musical history. There have been many developments in the sphere of music and one is naturally anxious to know what this serious scholar of yesteryear's music has to say of today's musical patterns. But Prof. Deodhar does not satisfy our interest on this score. One would have also welcomed an introduction by him, analysing the contents of this book in the right perspective. But once again he has chosen to remain silent in this respect.

The book is, on the whole, a very important aid to the study of the recent history of Hindustani music, and the tribute paid to the author and his labours by Shri P. L. Deshpande in his Preface is really well-deserved.

—VAMANRAO DESHPANDE

DILLI KE TOMARA (Part I) by Hariharniwas Dwivedi, Vidya Mandir Prakashan, Gwalior, 1973, Rs. 40.00 (*In Hindi*).

Written in simple Hindi, this book by Hariharniwas Dwivedi is an excellent dissertation on the history of the Tomaras. Hariharniwas Dwivedi is a prolific writer and has produced a number of historical works of note on varied subjects. The most important among these are: *Gwalior-Rajya-ki Abhilekha* (1947), *Gwalior-Rajyamen-Prachina-Murti-Kala* (1950), *Mansinghaur-Man-Kutoohala* (1953), an *Madhya deshhiya-Bhashe* (*Gwaliori*) (1955).

The present book is the first volume of his proposed work on the history of the Tomaras. The second volume on the Tomaras of Gwalior has yet to be published and we expect it to shed light on their contribution to Hindustani music during the mediaeval period of our history.

The book is divided into two parts of almost equal size; it contains a Foreword by Maharajkumar Dr. Raghubir Singh of Sitamau, four useful Appendices and an Index. The first part of the text (pp. 27-154) contains a critical analysis of the material which he has used in this work. The second part (pp. 159-312) is an outline of the history of the Tomaras of Delhi.

There is no doubt that the author has used almost all the available sources of history related to Archaeology, Epigraphy, Numismatics, Persian Chronicles, Hindi Literature and Jaina works. Some have been evaluated in this context for the first time and it is commendable that Hariharaniwas Dwivedi has drawn the attention of historians to *Deshi* literature since it certainly constitutes valuable source material for the writing of medieval Indian History.

As one studies the work, one realises that the author has certain preferences of his own, and that his study is largely selective. He refutes a few concepts in a somewhat lengthy manner. His arguments can be abridged to one-third of their length. Sometimes the existing views and theories are examined and his own conclusions are stated on the basis of very weak and vague references to literature or legend. Obviously, his method is polemical and tantamount to advocacy; it lacks the qualities of authentication and accurate evaluation of historical sources. To have pre-conceived notions and to try and prove them by selecting convenient material is not conducive to a dispassionate and impartial assessment of the subject. Eulogization can be the worst possible weakness in an author; when he is constructing the history of an Emperor or a dynasty, he has to be extremely careful and must restrain his zeal.

Hariharaniwas Dwivedi's theory of the Qutub Minar of Delhi (which he defines as *Pirithi-Nirapah-Stampho* on the basis of a few fragments of Devanagari inscriptions) can be examined in this context. He rejects the Persian chronicles as misleading and also brushes aside such vital data as the Arabic and Persian inscriptions which have been carved deep on the structural stones of the Minar. His use of the Devanagari inscriptions, too, is selective. Samvat 1256 (= A.H. 596/1199 A.D.) occurs twice and Samvat 1259 (= 599/1202) thrice on the basement storey. As the area was constantly under Muslim occupation since 589/1193, these dates could not have belonged to an alleged *Tomara-stambha*. The author adduces no evidence in support of his theory of conversion or to prove that a *prasada* of Anangapal or a *stambha* of the Minar's dimensions was ever built or existed. The author's interpretation as such is mere surmise. Most important of all is the architectural aspect of the problem; it has been totally ignored. The Hindus never built such stupendous and tapering free-standing minarets, and least of all with a stellate plan; such commemorative minars were largely in vogue in Afghanistan in the eleventh and twelfth century A.D. and among several such shafts there has survived the Minara of Khwaja Siah Posh c. 1150, which is exactly of the same plan and design.

In any case one happy feature of the book is that the author has suggested alternate lines of thought which may be pursued with profit. It is only in this way that history, or any other contemplative science, can grow. His work in this sense adds a new dimension to historical data. The book is an interesting contribution to the existing literature on the subject. The printing is good and the production is quite neat.

—R. NATH

DRAMA IN BRITAIN 1964-1973 by J. W. Lambert, published for the British Council by Longman Group Ltd., Essex, 1974, 50p (*In English*).

This publication of the British Council is a continuation of its surveys of the British Theatre. The series began in 1947 with Robert Speaight's *Drama Since 1939*. J. C. Trewin covered in his two chronicles the years 1945-1950 and 1951-1964.

The present work is an account of important theatrical undertakings in Britain. It deals with all aspects of the theatre and particularly with the growing involvement of British dramatists in contemporary life.

J. W. Lambert is particularly qualified to do a survey of this sort since he was for many years the Literary and Arts Editor of *The Sunday Times* and has also been closely associated with the work of the Arts Council of Great Britain and the Council of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts. He is obviously well acquainted with all the artistic, organisational and financial problems that theatre people in Britain have to face from time to time.

The book is a factual account of British Theatre since 1964 and the tone employed is sane and sober. There are no special insights, but there is no erratic posturing either. The work of the National Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Company, the English Stage Company, the Mermaid and other theatre organisations, is described in brief. There are chapters devoted to Fringe and Experimental Theatre, to visitors to Britain from overseas, to the Commercial and Regional Theatre. There is a list of plays first published since 1964 with an index and a bibliography.

It is a handy book for libraries and individuals to have. Unpretentious in size, cautious in its appraisal of plays and playwrights, this neat and cheap publication affords a quick, yet clear glimpse into Britain's theatre life.

YOJANA, published on behalf of the Planning Commission, Delhi, Vol. XVIII No. 18, October 15, 1974. Special number on *The Indian Film*.

SEMINAR, the Monthly Symposium, New Delhi, No. 184, December 1974. Special number on *The Cinema Situation*.

CLOSE-UP, published by Film Forum, Seventh Year, Nos. 1-4, 1974.

The recent increase in serious publications on the young Indian Cinema cannot but fill with hope enlightened spirits that are in despair over the actual state of the Indian Cinema. Every time one of the more

important directors of the new cinema writes articles or gives interviews, it seems like one more blow at this colossus. One almost wants to warn the big producers of Hindi films that henceforth they might find themselves working on mined ground. *Seminar* in its editorial even goes so far as to use the word 'battle'.

It seems to me that something essential and absolutely new is happening in the Indian Cinema. Dileep Padgaonkar in his article *The Parallel Stream* in *Seminar* rightly insists that this cinema, in contrast to other important national cinemas, has never known schools, movements or aesthetic revolutions. One could go further and say that in India the commercial cinema, in addition to the fact that it has always been the only one in existence, has invariably been made by people very little concerned with the aesthetics of cinematography. The camera—and this is my impression after having viewed, of course, only a limited number of films—was but a passive instrument intended to register a certain particular reality supposedly containing all elements of significance: characters, sets, and dialogue. This implies that the cineaste becomes a perfectly anonymous person, who neither creates nor expresses anything himself. After a few more or less important attempts, we now have a group of young cineastes for whom a film is not merely the transposition on the screen of a script but the creation by the camera, from a script, of a network of meanings. This, which is completely new, might perhaps explode the 'system'.

Our rebels try their hand at the game of destruction. One believes to have found again the tone of the articles of Truffaut in the *France-Observateur*. One must admit that the target is so vast that unless one is blind it cannot be missed. The target: the hundreds of commercial films with their seven and a half million spectators per day. Let us cite two obvious statements where the fact that they should give rise to polemics provokes surprise: Satyajit Ray (in his address delivered on the Twelfth Convocation of the Film and Television Institute at Poona) has the following to say on the subject of the director: "He does nothing because he knows nothing" (*Yojana*, p. 12). Kumar Shahani, writing on Indian films says in *Myths for Sale*, "One feeds the masses with opium and then one complains that art is inaccessible to them" (*Seminar*, p. 15). But surely all this is known or should be known. . .

More seriously, one is busy constructing a new cinema and a striking thing to note is that all the young cineastes who express themselves in these publications proclaim the paramount role of the director. Mani Kaul says, "A real film is inconceivable without a director" (*Close-up*, p. 5). M. T. Vasudevan Nair states, "Essentially a film is a director's medium" (*Close-up*, p. 13). This claim which sounds like a truism is extremely important in the Indian context. Let us consider the films that have had some commercial success: *Garam Hava* and *Ankur*. Everyone knows, and this is not without a degree of importance, that *Garam Hava* is a film by M. S. Sathyu and that *Ankur* is a film by Shyam Benegal. The commercial cinema then scents danger and takes immediate steps to follow suit. It begins to print the name of the director in huge letters on hoardings and in that

enormous mess which is the usual industry product one searches in vain for the specific style or contribution of the maker. What counts is that in order to scramble the cards the Hindi commercial cinema has started to elevate the cineaste to the level of the stars.

Young cineastes ambitiously elaborate constructive ideas on the cinema. After Bazin and others, one tries to answer the question—"What is the cinema?" The answers vary according to personalities. But they have this in common: they are fundamentally integrated in the Indian context. Here more than elsewhere, the cinema is an hybrid art so thoroughly permeated with theatre, literature and music that cinema as such is non-existent. Kumar Shahani says that "literariness or painterliness and surprisingly, even theatricality, when compared to the normal orgies of the vulgar imagination, still pass for good cinema" (*Seminar*, p. 13). Maya Darpan, which in his interview to Vijay Tendulkar (*Close-up*, p. 7), he declares as having been from the first conceived as colours and sound, is an example of an attempt at constructing a cinema free of the other arts. Mani Kaul pursues, through other ways, a similar quest of discovering a 'real cinema'—which is what would be revealed after ridding it of all parasitical vegetation—founded solely on coherent and precise concepts. The cineaste "decides on those concepts that are going to construct the film".

It is clear that any true artist, when he is truly expressing himself, thinks little of the future success of his work. From this arises the misunderstanding with which the best films of this young cinema are attacked—that they reach so small a public. Mani Kaul analyses this idea of communication and incidentally asks what communication the commercial film has with its public.

Most of these cineastes insist, and rightly so, that it is not enough for the Film Finance Corporation to finance films, and so in his article *The Success Formula*, Shyam Benegal says, "If we are serious about developing an alternate cinema, the FFC would have to develop a distribution circuit that is able to compete for audiences with the regular so called commercial films" (*Seminar*, p. 18). The established channels of distribution reject non-commercial films. Adoor Gopalkrishnan in his article *Money Power* grants that nationalisation of all the sectors of the film industry by one single stroke of parliamentary legislation might be a sound suggestion but has doubts whether an inefficient and bureaucratic government will be able "to direct and discipline a medium of such magnitude" (*Seminar*, p. 26).

A problem that arises is whether artificial distinctions between commercial and non-commercial should be made at all. Numerous examples have taught us that what is non-commercial today becomes commercial tomorrow. Should an Indian *A bout de souffle* (Breathless) appear, we would then have the pleasure of seeing all the distributors hastily changing their tune.

The battle which is being fought is simply that of expression against cynicism. That the creators be allowed to create is what is most important. And let no one say that the cinema must be this or that, or subservient

to the public, or that one could, for example, have an 'intermediate' cinema. In art, suits made to measure soon return to the second-hand clothes man. For the first time in the history of the Indian cinema, a group of young cineastes, starved of expression, has come into being and taken over the camera. It is vital that they should continue to be able to make films. Also, for the first time these young cineastes, doubling as theoreticians, turn back upon their art in order to develop a truly constructive thought.

We know that the passage to self-awareness represents 'the coming of age'. The prolonged infancy of the Indian Cinema seems at last to be ending. One must take into account this change, otherwise there will be some rude awakenings. For the Indian Cinema is it the end of naivete and the beginning of adulthood?

—HENRI MICCIOLLO

Folksongs of Gujarat

The Journal of the Indian Musicological Society has brought out a special issue (Vol. 5 No. 3, July-September 1974) on the folksongs of Gujarat. The late Zaverchand Meghani had devoted a lifetime to the collection and publication of songs of the Saurashtra region. Shri Madhubhai Patel, who edits this special number, has close ties with the southern region of Gujarat. In the twenty-two sections of the number, he outlines the events which take place in the rural communities of this area. Music in harmony with the various phases of village life is included here: the carving for a child, cradle songs and nursery rhymes, love and marriage refrains, work-songs and humorous pieces, dance tunes, tribal music and dirges. All these songs have been translated into English by Madhubhai Patel himself with the help of Miss Gey Hellier of Leeds. Had the Gujarati text been printed alongside the English translation, the rhythm and flavour of the original could perhaps have been suggested with greater fidelity and force.

The monograph is continued in the next number (Vol. 5 No. 4, October-December 1974) where twenty-four folksongs are printed in western notation. There are three appendices, one of which includes an index to the English texts of folksongs and another a Word List with meanings.

The entire monograph is bound to be of interest to ethnomusicologists, sociologists and folklorists and also to those who seek to understand the springs of a culture through its folklore.

Record Reviews

USTAD AMJAD ALI KHAN (Sarod). Tabla: Samta Prasad. Side One: *Raga-Rageshwari*; Side Two: *Raga-Kirwani*; Bihar-ki-gat. HMV EASD 1405 (Stereo).

GAZALS BY MUKESH.
HMV ECSD 2723 (Stereo).

SRI KAMAKSHI SUPRABHATAM AND OTHER SONGS IN PRAISE OF SRI KAMAKSHI RENDERED BY M. S. SUBBULAKSHMI.
HMV ECSD 3254 (Stereo).

SATRANGI SINDHI SANGEET. Music: C. Arjun; Lyrics: Goverdhan Bharati.
HMV ECSD 2735 (Stereo).

This bunch of records is a veritable mixed bag and perhaps no musical logic will be able to link them together.

Amjad Ali's record is a polished presentation. But to my mind in his Rageshwari, Kirwani and Bihar-ki-gat, he tends to waver in respect of the individual value of notes. Amjad Ali has verve, imagination and competence but he relies more on brilliance than on profound musical probing. The record is certainly not his best.

I have argued elsewhere that the *ghazal*, as a musical form, has now entered a phase where it is composed, sung and hence received as a song. Mukesh's pieces are no exception. Though Khayyam's music is based on classical melodies like Madhukauns, Yaman, Brindavani-Sarang, the *raga*-s are not more than frames. The impression that lingers is that of Mukesh's restful, nasal, nostalgic voice. *Rahi Hai Daad Talab* is the best of the five *ghazal*-s.

Subbulakshmi's disc falls in the category which can be broadly described as devotional music. *Kuru Suprabhatam* on one side (set in the Hindustani *raga* Bibhas) is both in purpose and spirit a recitation. It is strongly, clearly and tunelessly rendered and succeeds in drawing our attention totally to the words.

The other four pieces follow the pattern of initial recitation of a *shloka*, followed by a brief rendering of a devotional composition by Dikshitar and others. The stress is obviously not on musical elaboration, but on using music evocatively. This is achieved successfully in all the sections of the record.

The fourth disc is a collection of modern Sindhi songs. There are nine songs; they border on folk and film melodies and the record is musical-ly a stereotype.

—ASHOK RANADE

Statement about ownership and other particulars about the Quarterly Journal of the National Centre for the Performing Arts to be published in the first issue every year after last of February.

FORM IV
(See Rule 8)

1. Place of publication : Nariman Point, Bombay-400 021.
2. Periodicity of its publication : Quarterly.
3. Printer's Name : Shri V. B. Gharpure.
Whether citizen of India : Yes.
Address : Tata Press Limited,
414, Veer Savarkar Marg,
Bombay-400 025.
4. Publisher's Name : Shri J. J. Bhabha.
Whether citizen of India : Yes.
Address : National Centre for the Performing Arts,
Nariman Point,
Bombay-400 021.
5. Editor's Name : Dr. Kumud Mehta.
Whether citizen of India : Yes.
Address : National Centre for the Performing Arts,
Nariman Point,
Bombay-400 021.
6. Names and addresses of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one percent of the total capital. : The journal is owned by a non-profit-making philanthropic organisation and is published on a non-commercial basis. No individual owner.

I, J. J. Bhabha, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date: 15-3-1975. J. J. BHABHA
Signature of Publisher

Published by J. J. Bhabha for the National Centre for the Performing Arts, Bombay House, Bombay 400 023.—Edited by Dr. Kumud Mehta and printed by V. B. Gharpure at the Tata Press Ltd., 414 Veer Savarkar Marg, Bombay 400 025.

Reg. No. 24073/73

MUTHUSWAMI DIKSHITAR BI-CENTENARY, MARCH 1975

The National Centre for the Performing Arts
in association with the
Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha
Bharatiya Music and Arts Society
Fine Arts Society, Chembur
Music Triangle, Santacruz
Bombay University Music Centre
Gana Kala Vidya Nilayam, Goregaon

| Date | | Programme | Venue |
|---------|--------|---|--|
| 15/3/75 | 7 p.m. | M. S. Subbulakshmi | Shanmukhananda Hall |
| 16/3/75 | 6 p.m. | M. D. Ramanathan | Gandhi Maidan, Chembur |
| 17/3/75 | 8 p.m. | Embar Vijayaraghavachariar (Harikatha Kalakshepam on the life of Muthuswami Dikshitar) | Shanmukhananda Hall |
| 18/3/75 | 8 p.m. | Yamini Krishnamurti (Special Bharatanatyam recital based on Dikshitar compositions) | Shanmukhananda Hall |
| 19/3/75 | 8 p.m. | K. S. Narayanaswami (Veena) | St. Anthony's High School Hall, Vakola, Santacruz East |
| 20/3/75 | 7 p.m. | T. Brinda | NCPA Auditorium, Nariman Point |
| 21/3/75 | 8 p.m. | M. L. Vasanthakumari | Bharatiya Music & Arts Society Hall |
| 22/3/75 | 7 p.m. | D. K. Pattammal | NCPA Auditorium, Nariman Point |
| 23/3/75 | 6 p.m. | Alathur Srinivasa Iyer | Bharatiya Music & Arts Society Hall |
| 24/3/75 | 8 p.m. | Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer | Vivek Education Society School, Goregaon |